

AgrAbility e•Note

September 2021

A monthly update for AgrAbility projects and friends of AgrAbility

National AgrAbility Project News

The AgrAbility Virtual State Fair (VSF) returns in October to help celebrate AgrAbility's 30th anniversary! Participating SRAPs will have their own day to share their successes and mission. Visit www.facebook.com/AgrAbility-Virtual-State-Fair-105811844494828 and twitter.com/AgrabilityVSF to check out last year's VSF posts and plan for this year's.



The next Regional Workshop will be held in Manhattan, Kansas, November 16-18, 2021. Staff are working on the agenda and tours, so more information will be coming out soon.

For anyone that might be interested in hosting a Regional Workshop in conjunction with Goodwill and NAP, please contact Tess tmckeel@goodwillfingerlakes.org or JoBeth jbrath@goodwillfingerlakes.org.



2022 NTW will be in person!!!! Staff are working with WI AgrAbility and the Madison Concourse Hotel again to bring you an in-person NTW for 2022. Tentative dates are March 14-17. The first planning call was held on August 23rd at 3 pm. Meetings will continue to be held on the third Thursday of the month at 3 pm ET. Call for Proposals, Posters, and Exhibitor/Sponsor forms have been sent out. Access the

Google Form version of each of these at the following links: [Call for Presentations Google form](#), [Call for Posters Google form](#), and [Exhibitor-Sponsor Google form](#). For anyone preferring a printable copy of these forms, they are available on the NAP website on the [NTW page](#).

To join the Planning Committee or for any questions about the NTW, contact Tess at tmckeel@goodwillfingerlakes.org.

The archive of the August 19 all-staff meeting is available at www.agrability.org/extranet/staff-resources just below the Virtual New Staff Training section.

The last 2021 NTW virtual session was on August 31st. They have all been recorded and are available on the NAP website [HERE](#), or one can find them by going to the NAP website, then Online Training, then Archived Webinars, and then NEW! 2021 AgrAbility National Training Workshop Virtual Sessions. There was great attendance at, and

evaluations of, all the sessions, so if anyone missed any sessions, check them out.

NAP has sent to each SRAP 100 complimentary copies of the 2021 *AgrAbility Harvest* newsletter plus two copies of the newly revised *Conducting Agricultural Worksite Assessments*. Please contact jonesp@purdue.edu if your SRAP did not receive these.



More than 70 people participated in the AgrAbility/North Central FRSAN webinar “Migrant/Seasonal Farmworkers: Stress Issues and Solutions.” It is now archived at www.agrability.org/online-training/archived/webinar-series.



Ed Sheldon and Chuck Baldwin presented for the [National AgrAbility Project](#) at the Florida A&M University (FAMU)/LIFE Project 1890s Workshop August 26-27. [Georgia AgrAbility](#) was also well-represented by Mason Dean and Kyle Haney who brought down two AgrAbility clients from GA to speak as a farmer panel. [More](#)

Toolbox Spotlight

The [Walk'n'Chair Combination Walker-Wheelchair](#) (complete with hand brakes, hinged footrests, and reversible handles, seat, and carrying basket) is designed to quickly transition from one to the other. As a rolling walker, the two large wheels are designed to allow one to navigate stably over uneven terrain (e.g., dirt trails, grass, gravel) and snow-covered areas. As a wheelchair, it can be either driven by the user or pushed by another person.



State and Regional AgrAbility Project News

Alaska

Alaska AgrAbility's (AKAgrAbility's) summer eNewsletter was published and distributed during the month of August. [More](#)



In early August, AKAgrAbility participated in the first annual Kenai Peninsula 4-H Ag Expo in Soldotna, Alaska. This agricultural showcase provided vendor opportunities and a front row seat for the community to engage with 4-H exhibits, livestock showing & auction, and workshops and educational opportunities around agricultural concepts. [More](#)

Staff participated in a series of content booth slots during the Alaska State Fair in Palmer, Alaska. Upwards of 2,000 people have passed through the Alaska CES Extension and 4-H Building daily to see 4-H exhibits and participate in information gathering about CES programs such as AgrAbility.

DeShana York has been participating in the planning committee for the first annual upcoming [Farm Bureau Convention & Tradeshow](#) in conjunction with the Western Sustainable Agriculture Research & Education (Western SARE) Conference this November 12-14, 2021. [More](#)



California



California AgrAbility's Esmeralda Mandujano served as co-presenter for National AgrAbility's North Central FRSSAN webinar series. Esmeralda and NAP's Kimber Nicoletti-Martinez presented the "Migrant/Seasonal Farmworkers: Stress Issues and Solutions." [More](#)

California AgrAbility staff participated in the Mexican Consulate's Ventanilla de Salud monthly meeting moderated by Program Director Oscar Velasco. [More](#)

Staff joined the "Celebrating Veteran Total Farmer Health" webinar, the second session of "Veterans Harvest: A Virtual Conference for Veterans in Agriculture". Natalie Roy from the AgriSafe Network highlighted the various factors that contribute to total farmer health. [More](#)



Colorado

Winter Workshops are back! Following the long health and safety break for COVID, the Colorado AgrAbility Project is back on the road for their in-person Winter Workshop sessions statewide. [More](#)

Georgia



Staff hosted two webinars during the month of August with Dr. Therese Willkomm. The first webinar was entitled "Farming with Vision Loss - Voices from the Past" and was hosted on August 11th, 2021. [More](#)

Staff have been offering AgrAbility clients free marketing services for their farm. This includes logo design and marketing consultation.

Georgia AgrAbility staff and farmers participated in the HBCU Assistive Ag Tech & Empowerment Workshop in Tallahassee, FL, on August 26th-27th, 2021, hosted by NAP. [More](#)



Georgia AgrAbility was invited to bring the Mobile Learning Lab for the grand opening of the new extension facility in Troup County on November 6th. The AgDay will focus on promoting agriculture to the entire community. Staff are excited for the opportunity to share about AgrAbility and showcase assistive technology.

Indiana

Indiana AgrAbility participated as an exhibitor at the Indiana State Fair in the Corteva FFA Pavilion. [More](#)

Steve Swain, the project rural rehabilitation specialist, conducted a Vocational Rehabilitation Services farm accessibility assessment for a small farm owner. [More](#)

Kansas



Kansas AgrAbility AT Specialist Karin Rasmussen is a wealth of information for the farmers and ranchers in her western Kansas community. Earlier in the year, Karin assisted an AgrAbility customer and, as often happens, formed a relationship with the family. [More](#)

SKIL (Southeast Kansas Independent Living Resource Center), Kansas AgrAbility's non-profit partner, held a customer appreciation day in Parsons, Kansas. [More](#)

Maine

Maine AgrAbility's Boots-2-Bushels continued with its monthly in-person workshops in August at Rustic Roots Farm, in Farmington, ME. Farmers Erica and Dave talked about their SARE grant, small tools needed for a mostly no-till farm, and how they run their various farm shares. The hands-on learning continues to be successful.



Maine AgrAbility's first article published in the Loggers Voice is about Maine AgrAbility's LogAbility program. LogAbility will be providing routine articles in this news outlet. [More](#)

Staff are excited to introduce Michaela Marden, a USM master's OT student completing her Level 2 Fieldwork experience with Maine AgrAbility. [More](#)

Richard Brzozowski spent three days with farmers from Kansas who were touring Maine. AgrAbility was discussed and Richard was able to help connect Kansas Farm Bureau staff members with the KSU AgrAbility team.

Michigan



This year's AGRO EXPO was a great success! The 2021 AGRO EXPO featured choppers and tillage demonstrations as well as presentations covering various aspects of the agricultural community. Exhibitors at the event provided information about nutrients, seeds, and innovative equipment to help Michigan agribusinesses.

Michigan AgrAbility is expanding their pain management assistance to Spanish-speaking farmers. [More](#)

Missouri

MU Extension specialists and Show-Me Farm Safety collaborative partners spent 12 days handing out MO AgrAbility health awareness materials, behavioral/mental health resources, and agricultural safety prevention tips at the 2021 Missouri State Fair. [More](#)

Heroes to Hives Missouri State Chapter field days were Thursday, August 19th and Saturday, August 21st, 10am & 2pm. In addition to hive inspections, beekeepers also did some honey bottling and wax rendering.

Missouri was buzzed with the arrival of their Slovenian AZ hives. AZ hive design eliminates all lifting by the beekeepers. This hive also works from the rear. [More](#)

Joni Harper, County Engagement Specialist in Agriculture and Environment, was a speaker during the August 24th National AgrAbility panel presentation on State/Regional Programs for farmer veterans. [More](#)

University of Missouri-Kansas City School of Pharmacy, a Missouri AgrAbility collaborator, provided rural wellness outreach and education at the Missouri State Fair on Aug 14th in the MO Ag Theater. Missourians from 44 counties were reached through the effort. [More](#)





On August 27, 2021, Mr. David Middleton- ISFOP farm outreach worker (FOW) and Missouri hemp outreach coordinator, and Mr. Nahshon Bishop- ISFOP small farm specialist and Missouri AgrAbility co-PI, traveled with the Jesup Wagon 2.0 to the Webster County Fairgrounds to speak at the annual Ozark Homesteaders conference.

Missouri AgrAbility marketing was part of the BIA-MO exhibit at the Redbird Rookies Health Fair hosted by St. Louis Cardinals Care. BIA-MO volunteers Kitty Newsham, PhD, and Angie Nowak, RN, shared AgrAbility information and brain injury safety activity sheets with youth and their families. [More](#)



Missouri AgrAbility is featured in the Brain Injury Association of Missouri (BIA-MO) Annual Statewide Conference Registration Brochure as the Resources in Rural Missouri track sponsor. [More](#)

Nebraska

Nebraska AgrAbility staff will be participating in Niagara University's Emergency Management Disability Awareness Training program in Nebraska in November 2021. [More](#)



AgrAbility began work with News Channel Nebraska to produce client videos to use in featuring disabilities served, stories of clients, and AT clients currently use. Filming is complete and staff will be using these clips for outreach.

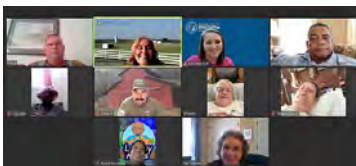
The Nebraska AgrAbility team was at Nebraska State Fair for two days. Both days were well attended during the "Largest Classroom Days", and children were educated about sleep and AgrAbility.



Nebraska AgrAbility had a presence at the Cuming County Fair in West Point, Nebraska. Some past clients stopped by and visited, and it is always nice to catch up.

In May 2021, the SILO movie was made available virtually to families and youth participants of the Fillmore County Extension Youth Ag Safety Day. A community-wide viewing is being planned in Geneva late September. [More](#)

North Carolina



August 25, 2021, NC AgrAbility hosted the Peer Support Networking Event for farmers in the program. Ten people joined and shared what they do and their experiences in farming with a disability. All of them were happy with the meeting and would like to have more sessions like this.

NC AgrAbility has actively coordinated services with partners and collaborators, received training from the NTW, AgriSafe, Summer Self-Care, and other programs, and shared educational opportunities with partners and farmers.

Ohio

Ohio AgrAbility staff spent much of the summer on outreach to farmers and gardeners, presenting "Ergonomic Gardening", and "Ohio AgrAbility - Assistive Technology to Keep You Productive" workshops. [More](#)

Workshop resources and videos from past workshops are available here.

OAP rural rehabilitation coordinators continue their farm visits, Voc Rehab assessments, and technical assistance to farmers across Ohio.



Caregiver Support Network

Ohio AgrAbility is proud to announce that the Caregiver Support Network is hosting a free webinar October 8, 2 pm EDT: "Let's talk about Caregivers and Mental Health". OSU Extension Behavioral Health Field Specialist Bridget Britton will present about improving mental health in rural and other limited-access areas, [More](#)

Pennsylvania

August brought the return of Ag Progress Days to Penn State University's research fields. The three-day event is Pennsylvania's largest outdoor agricultural exposition with over 400 exhibitors from the United States and Canada. It was great to see Life Essentials at the event. [More](#)



AgrAbility PA staff is looking forward to fall, the change of season ahead, and the ability to continue serving farmers and agriculture workers for disability or long-term health condition in Pennsylvania!

Tennessee



TN AgrAbility with University of TN Institute of Agriculture celebrated TN Farm Bureau's happy 100th birthday! 100 years ago, a group of farmers gathered with the hopes of creating an organization to better the lives of farmers and rural people in Tennessee. [More](#)

Happy [#NationalFarmersMarketWeek](#) (August 1-7, 2021)! TN Department of Ag promotes buying local. [More](#)

There was another session of TN New Farmer Academy this month, starting with farm tours with the TN State University East TN New Farmer Academy where farmers learned additional information about niche crops, agritourism, Community Supported Ag (CSA), organic production, and AgrAbility services. [More](#)



It was a fun day under the shade tree where 20 New Farmer Academy participants gathered at the McVay Cattle Farm in Millington, TN. Participants learned about his operation (even got to feed some of the cattle); beekeeping; poultry production via ZOOM; cattle and small ruminant production, and TN AgrAbility services.

Another successful grain bin safety/rescue awareness training was held in the Upper Cumberland TN counties on the beautiful Catesa Farms in Upper Cumberland TN. Fifty-four farmers and rescue personnel went through 4 hours of classroom work and 4 hours of hands-on grain bin rescue training.

[More](#)



Meet Emily Webb, a TN AgrAbility farmer. She and her family operate a beef cattle farm raising straw and hay and riding horses. She has had three back and two knee surgeries. She is like the Energizer Bunny; she keeps on going. [More](#)



Texas

The Texas AgrAbility course "Working with Farmers & Ranchers with Disabilities: An AgrAbility Resource for Occupational Therapy Practitioners" is now available online and offers CEU credits. [More](#)



Staff provided an educational webinar on Vocational Rehabilitation services in collaboration with Disability Rights Texas. [More](#)

Texas AgrAbility provided an educational webinar for migrant & seasonal farmworkers. The webinar in Spanish highlighted services provided by Texas AgrAbility to support migrant & seasonal farmworkers and agencies that support them.

A webinar titled "Independent Living in Rural Communities" will be hosted on September 14, 2021, in collaboration with the Brazos Valley Center for Independent Living. The webinar will cover services provided by the CILs and support for individuals with disabilities in the community. [Register here.](#)



A webinar for migrant & seasonal farmworkers "Assistive Technology for Farm Workers & their Employers" will be hosted on September 21, 2021. The webinar will cover types of assistive technology for farmworkers. [Register here.](#)

Texas AgrAbility partnered with Rachel Mims from ARTillery Avenue Farm to highlight farmer & rancher mental health. Rachel Mims, farmer, veteran, and mental health therapist, shared helpful tips and resources for mental health awareness for farmers and ranchers. Readers can check out all the tips on the Texas AgrAbility Instagram highlights.



Utah

AgrAbility of Utah set up a display table and was able to visit with many of the participants at the Utah Wool Growers Association annual convention in Brigham City, UT, on Aug. 2. Utah has approximately 300,000 sheep, which ranks fifth nationally.

On Aug. 4th and 11th, AgrAbility staff attended and explained AgrAbility at Field Days in Garland, and Wellsville, UT. The two events were held to educate farmers and ranchers in the surrounding areas, and topics included irrigation techniques, hemp production, and cover crops, and was sponsored by Utah State University Extension.

Michael Porter from AgrAbility of Utah enjoyed attending the NTW Regional Training Workshop in Billings, MT, on Aug. 9-11 and reported to staff the many things he learned about mental health and suicide prevention.

AgrAbility of Utah staff met online with administrative staff from the Utah Office of Rehabilitation on August 18 to discuss concerns and answer questions about each other's organization.

On Aug. 31, AgrAbility staff attended and set up a display table at the Central Utah Grazing Expo in Nephi, UT. This is the second year the Central Utah Grazing Utah has been held.

Virginia

AgrAbility Virginia is currently working with 22 farmer clients at various levels of engagement and need, including a beginning blueberry farming family in Hanover County whose son has autism.

AgrAbility Virginia staff are working with Virginia Tech intern Zoey Van Peppen to generate a PSA introduction video targeting youth to increase awareness of AgrAbility Virginia.

The AgrAbility Virginia advisory group will be meeting via Zoom on Tuesday, October 26th.

AgrAbility Virginia Field Coordinator Tony Edwards and Outreach Specialist Liza Dobson will be attending the Eastern Regional Farmer Veteran Coalition Conference in Knoxville, TN, in November.

The Virginia State University Mobile Educational Unit is being finalized and delivered to campus at the end of August. The unit will be debuting at the Virginia State Fair, though access will be limited due to COVID restrictions.

Virginia Tech engineers working with AgrAbility Virginia are finalizing a robotic glove assistive technology and are hoping for small-scale testing with farmers in the fall.

AgrAbility Virginia staff helped author three recently published resources:

- [Assistive Technologies to Support Farmers with Low Vision or Blindness](#) (Resource Number:ALCE-259NP)
 - [Assistive Technologies for Upper Extremity Mobility on the Farm](#) (Resource Number:ALCE-260NP)
 - [Assistive Technologies for Lower Extremity Mobility on the Farm](#) (Resource Number:ALCE-258NP)
-

Washington

Washington State AgrAbility Program (WSAP) has made successful communication with, and collaborated with, WA Department of Vocational Services. A targeted flyer was developed for DVR counselors and distributed through the regional managers explaining AgrAbility and how AgrAbility can help.

Members of the WSAP team and stakeholders attended the Western Region AgrAbility Conference in Billings, Montana, August 9-11, 2021. Networking, collaborating, and education happened for those who attended.

Due to COVID numbers on the rise, the WSAP stakeholder meeting August 31st became a virtual meeting with 14 in attendance. [More](#)

WSAP exhibited at two fairs and distributed printed materials, 300 first aid kits, and 60 masks. Through these events, potential clients and lending library checkouts emerged.



With the return of mask mandates and the rising COVID numbers, WSAP has been distributing silicone mask inserts at events. Placed beneath the mask, these inserts are designed to keep masks from touching the face and can make it feel easier to breath.

[More](#)

Wisconsin

AgrAbility of Wisconsin staff had quite the end to the summer with their partners' Easterseals Wisconsin FARM program golf outing fundraiser. The weather was perfect for a day on the links.



Staff is now gearing up for fall and with that comes their first big tradeshow in a year-and-a-half. AgrAbility of Wisconsin will be sharing a booth with the National AgrAbility Project at World Dairy Expo September 28- October 2. If any reader is around Madison, WI, make sure to stop by and say hello.

International AgrAbility Network News

AgrAbility for Africa



Lake Victoria, a freshwater lake that supports the livelihood of over 40 million people in the region, and the Nile River fishing industries in East Africa are experiencing hard times as a result of climate change, illegal fishing practices, marine plastic waste, and eco-system degradation from industrial and farm waste pollution. [More](#)

Experiences of AgrAbility for Africa staff have taught them that there is great need to enhance farm productivity for their clients, and to identify and promote alternative employment opportunities for farmers, ranchers, and farm workers faced with disabilities. Through collaborations, the AgrAbility for Africa staff endeavors to achieve that. [More](#)



StaffChanges and Recognition

Colorado

The Colorado AgrAbility Project is pleased to announce that they have a new employee. Made available through FR SAN and WRASAP grants, Chad Reznicek, a behavioral health specialist, has joined the staff to assist Colorado farmers and ranchers with behavioral health issues in seeking resources appropriate to their needs. [More](#)



AgrAbilityin the News

Click titles below for news stories featuring AgrAbility projects .

- [AgrAbility Provides Assistance to Farmer with Limited Mobility](#) (AgrAbility for Pennsylvanians)

- [The Rural Woman Podcast Episode 110 – Enhancing the Quality of Life for Farmers, Ranchers, and Agricultural Workers with Disabilities with Rachel Jarman](#) (Ohio AgrAbility)
- [AgrAbility Project - Missouri](#) (Missouri AgrAbility Project, National AgrAbility Project)
- [Texas AgrAbility again offering in-person programming](#) (Texas AgrAbility)
- [Discovery Park hosting Antique Tractor Show, movie screening](#) (Tennessee AgrAbility Project)
- [Farming with a disability? Visit AgrAbility PA's exhibit at Ag Progress Days](#) (AgrAbility for Pennsylvanians)
- [WASHINGTON STATE AGRABILITY: BUILDING A NEW EXTENSION PROGRAM DURING COVID-19](#) (Washington State AgrAbility Project)
- [Wilmington Garden Club holds meeting](#) (AgrAbility)
- [Alternative gardens can help make growing more accessible](#) (Maine AgrAbility)
- [AgrAbility to provide tips for safe fall harvest](#) (Illinois AgrAbility Unlimited)
- [Three Webinars Scheduled for Disabled Individuals in Agriculture](#) (Texas AgrAbility)
- [Mental health and addiction help: By ag and for ag during wave of rural suicide](#) (Colorado AgrAbility Project)
- [Illinois AgrAbility to demonstrate assistive technology at Farm Progress Show](#) (Illinois AgrAbility Unlimited)
- [AgrAbility Virginia is Supporting the Farmers of Virginia](#) (AgrAbility Virginia)
- [Veterans interested in agriculture encouraged to attend upcoming workshop](#) (Indiana AgrAbility Project)
- [AgrAbility of Wisconsin Helps Farmers Keep Doing What They Love](#) (AgrAbility of Wisconsin)

OtherNews

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

- [USDA Invests \\$700 million to Provide Relief to Small Producers, Processors, Distributors, Farmers Markets and Seafood Processing Vessels and Processors Impacted by COVID-19](#)
- [Room for Improvement: An Online Tool for Reducing the Spread of COVID-19 in Farmworker Housing](#)
- [Diverse landcover boosts yields for major U.S. crops, study finds](#)
- [Safeguarding children who live, work & play on farms](#)
- [USDA Announces \\$10 Million in Grant Funding Available for the Specialty Crop Multi-State Program](#)
- [USDA program aims to support rural microenterprises](#)
- [Without 'right to repair,' businesses lose time and money](#)
- [Recent fatalities in Ohio a tragic reminder of manure storage dangers](#)
- [USDA invests \\$50M in new agreements for racial justice and equity](#)
- [Heroic Bystander Saves Man in Wheelchair From Oncoming Train in Viral Video](#)

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](#)



September 2021

National AgrAbility Project

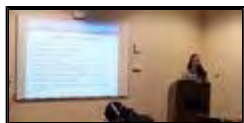
Ed Sheldon and Chuck Baldwin presented for the [National AgrAbility Project](#) at the Florida A&M University (FAMU)/LIFE Project 1890s Workshop August 26-27. [Georgia AgrAbility](#) was also well-represented by Mason Dean and Kyle Haney who brought down two AgrAbility clients from GA to speak as a farmer panel. The workshop was well-attended with 46 people from eight different states participating.



The joint workshop included introductions to co-sponsors AgrAbility, FAMU Agriculture and Natural Resources Extension, and the [Legacy Innovation Farming Economics project](#) (LIFE). The LIFE project is a USDA 2501 grant funded project comprised of the [Legacy Farming and Health Group](#) (LFHG - John Jamerson), [Peoples Foundation](#) (Tameka Peoples), and the NAP.



Other highlights included hands-on AT demonstrations by Bill Begley of [Life Essentials](#), an aquaponics demonstration by Gabriel Mont-Reynaud of LFHG, an inspiring session on entrepreneurship and value-added products featuring [Chef Joseph](#) (Darrell Anderson) of LFHG, and a discussion about the potential benefits of a plant-based diet by Jo Saint-George and Dr. Robert Bowman of the [HBCU College of Plant-Based Lifestyle Medicine](#).



Other informative sessions included presentations by [Florida Division of Voc Rehab](#), [FL Alliance for Assistive Services and Technology](#) (FAAST), [Veterans Florida](#), and [Florida-Region Farm Credit](#).

In addition to the workshop for adults, a concurrent conference was held for youth from two local high schools and a number of FAMU college students interested in agriculture with 97 students in attendance! Ed Sheldon, John Jamerson, Bill Begley,



Gabriel Mont-Reynaud, and others spoke and gave demonstrations to the youth. FL State Representative Kevin Chambliss and FAMU Provost Dr. Maurice Edington spoke with the youth, while Dean Dr. Robert W. Taylor gave the welcome to the adult workshop.

The NAP would like to thank all of those who participated in the planning and implementation of the workshop, with a special thanks to our partners in the LIFE Project, John Jamerson and Tameka Peoples, and to our hosts from FAMU Extension - Dr. Gilbert Queeley, Vonda Richardson, Renysa Harris, Rhonda Miller, Dr. Dreamal Worthen, Cynthia Holloway, Dr. Keith Parker, and the rest of their staff.



Submitted by Chuck Baldwin and Ed Sheldon

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September 2021

Alaska

Alaska AgrAbility's (AKAgrAbility's) summer eNewsletter was published and distributed during the month of August. Staff included articles on Ned Stoller's Alaska visit, what clients can expect from an AgrAbility assessment, Farmer Veteran Coalition national advisory panel, spotlights on a local disability support organization, the long-reach tree trimmer, and upcoming events. Read the copy or sign up to receive future copies [here](#).



In early August, AKAgrAbility participated in the first annual Kenai Peninsula 4-H Ag Expo in Soldotna, Alaska. This agricultural showcase provided vendor opportunities and a front row seat for the community to engage with 4-H exhibits, livestock showing & auction, and workshops and educational opportunities around agricultural concepts. The AKAgrAbility team spoke to many 4-H families and the public at large about assistive technology and provided a demonstration of some smaller equipment.

DeShana York has been participating in the planning committee for the first annual upcoming [Farm Bureau Convention & Tradeshow](#) in conjunction with the Western Sustainable Agriculture Research & Education (Western SARE) Conference this November 12-14, 2021. The hope is that this new event will bring further education, engagement, and excitement around all things agriculture in Alaska. The planning group is seeking vendors and potential presenters. Anyone interested in participating, please contact DeShana at ddyork@alaska.edu.



Submitted by DeShana York

September 2021

California



California AgrAbility's Esmeralda Mandujano served as co-presenter for National AgrAbility's North Central FRSSAN webinar series. Esmeralda and NAP's Kimber Nicoletti-Martinez presented the "Migrant/Seasonal Farmworkers: Stress Issues and Solutions." Esmeralda's section titled "The Intersection of Farmworker Occupational and Mental Health" focused on the effect of musculoskeletal disorders on mental and behavioral health. She also addressed environmental and workplace

psychosocial risk factors that impact stress levels, and emphasized solutions and resources that support improved health and wellbeing outcomes for farmworkers experiencing stress.

California AgrAbility staff participated in the Mexican Consulate's Ventanilla de Salud monthly meeting moderated by Program Director Oscar Velasco. The meeting's agenda covered program and provider updates and Binational Health Week event planning updates. The consulate will be distributing information on regional events happening throughout the state of California. Providers in attendance distributed registration information on educational events for caregivers, COVID-19 resources, and information for [SeniorLink](#) - a prevention and early intervention program designed to provide support services to older adults experiencing isolation or early signs of depression or anxiety.

Staff joined the "Celebrating Veteran Total Farmer Health" webinar, the second session of "Veterans Harvest: A Virtual Conference for Veterans in Agriculture". Natalie Roy from the AgriSafe Network highlighted the various factors that contribute to total farmer health. Special focus was placed on the challenges veterans living in rural communities face in accessing appropriate mental health services.



Submitted by California AgrAbility Project

September 2021

Colorado

Winter Workshops are back! Following the long health and safety break for COVID, the Colorado AgrAbility Project is back on the road for their in-person Winter Workshop sessions statewide. The sessions will deliver information on CO AgrAbility's traditional programs that staff call "AgrAbility 101", and then will feature the newest staff member presenting on behavioral health issues of aging. The last presentation will be delivered by Dr. Norm Dalsted and will be a topic of interest to all farmers: "How will the new tax issues affect my bottom line". Exact dates and locations are not decided yet, but staff will offer programs in Steamboat, Lamar, Pueblo, Cortez, Sterling, and Grand Junction. Stay on the lookout for further news and direct emails giving dates, times, and locations.

Staff Changes

The Colorado AgrAbility Project is pleased to announce that they have a new employee. Made available through FRISAN and WRASAP grants, Chad Reznicek, a behavioral health specialist, has joined the staff to assist Colorado farmers and ranchers with behavioral health issues in seeking resources appropriate to their needs. Chad grew up in rural Nebraska where his parents were raised on farms and agricultural values and ethics were woven into all aspects of their lives. He has worked as a licensed clinical therapist since 2001. Chad's professional experience has included residential treatment, correctional settings, and community-based programs with a wide range of populations and services. He has taken a particular interest in trauma recovery, suicide prevention, and generally empowering people to understand behavioral health issues from a practical and strength-based perspective so that they can take charge of their own wellbeing. Chad is a proud husband and the father of 2 incredible children. He welcomes any questions or feedback at chad.reznicek@colostate.edu.



Submitted by Jim Craig

September 2021

Georgia



Staff hosted two webinars during the month of August with Dr. Therese Willkomm. The first webinar was entitled "Farming with Vision Loss - Voices from the Past" and was hosted on August 11th, 2021. During this webinar Dr. Therese shared a collection of interviews with farmers who are blind and who shared their experiences and adaptations to continue farming with a vision loss. The second webinar was entitled "Make Stuff and Love People" and was hosted on August 18th, 2021. Dr. Therese shared the joy of making thousands of assistive technology devices, discoveries of new tools and materials for rapid fabrication, and lessons learned over the last 30 years. Her new book, "Make Stuff and Love People", can be purchased on [Amazon](#).

Georgia AgrAbility staff and farmers participated in the HBCU Assistive Ag Tech & Empowerment Workshop in Tallahassee, FL, on August 26th-27th, 2021, hosted by NAP. Georgia AgrAbility led the farmer panel portion of the workshop to let the participants hear about AgrAbility firsthand from farmers. Thanks to Chuck Baldwin, Ed Sheldon, and NAP for the invitation to participate in such a meaningful workshop.



Submitted by AgrAbility in Georgia

September 2021

Indiana

Indiana AgrAbility participated as an exhibitor at the Indiana State Fair in the Corteva FFA Pavilion. The exhibit included AgrAbility publications, the "It's About Hope" video, the assistive technology tool tower, the Life Essentials John Deere tractor and lift, and the Bridging Horizons Community Service Contest. Corteva Agriscience has an active Disability Awareness group. They contacted AgrAbility to offer their assistance to staff the display in the FFA Pavilion, which they did. The exhibit provided the opportunity to present AgrAbility and disability awareness to Corteva and the general public. The [IndyStar](#) reported attendance for the 18 days to be 830,390 visitors.

Steve Swain, the project rural rehabilitation specialist, conducted a Vocational Rehabilitation Services farm accessibility assessment for a small farm owner. The farm was 10 acres with just over one acre of produce and flowers. His sales include CSAs, farmers markets, restaurants, and an on-farm store.

Submitted by Steve Swain

September 2021

Kansas



Kansas AgrAbility AT Specialist Karin Rasmussen is a wealth of information for the farmers and ranchers in her western Kansas community. Earlier in the year, Karin assisted an AgrAbility customer and, as often happens, formed a relationship with the family. During casual conversation, Karin mentioned Farm Rescue's program. Karin learned of Farm Rescue from a recent KAP staff meeting when their program was introduced by

Tawnie Larson, project coordinator. Fast forward several months and the family needed assistance with another challenge. The primary producer had been facing cancer treatment for several months and needed surgery and a hospital stay four hours away from home. The family thought they would be able to handle harvest on their own but with a few setbacks, they asked for help from Farm Rescue. The family reached out on Friday and Farm Rescue deployed equipment and volunteers within a few days and assisted the family with their harvest. The video of an interview with Farm Rescue staff and the Kansas family that they assisted can be watched [here](#).

SKIL (Southeast Kansas Independent Living Resource Center), Kansas AgrAbility's non-profit partner, held a customer appreciation day in Parsons, Kansas. Events included COVID-19 vaccinations, live music, free hotdogs, and other goodies. In conjunction with SKIL, Assistive Technology for Kansans (ATK) provides device loans to customers so that they can try the equipment before they make a purchase. ATK also coordinates a program that provides low interest loans for those that need a little help purchasing devices or modifications and, as available, provides quality refurbished devices and equipment. These programs are part of the Assistive Technology Act in each state.

Submitted by Tawnie Larson

September 2021

Maine

Maine AgrAbility's first article published in the [Loggers Voice](#) is about Maine AgrAbility's LogAbility program. LogAbility will be providing routine articles in this news outlet. Future articles will feature aging, specific diseases, conditions, and common injuries that can be best addressed by loggers at work. These practical articles will also include interviews with workers in the logging industry whenever possible. <https://wp.me/p8QzEP-1Mw>

Staff are excited to introduce Michaela Marden, a USM master's OT student completing her Level 2 Fieldwork experience with Maine AgrAbility. Michaela is working with a farmer client with a vision impairment on using his new AT to maneuver independently around his farm property. She is also developing a presentation for service providers about cultivating relationships for use in 2022.

Submitted by Lani Carlson

September 2021

Michigan

Michigan AgrAbility is expanding their pain management assistance to Spanish-speaking farmers. As part of providing support to farmers, Michigan AgrAbility works with individual farmers to determine ways in which farm work can be done while minimizing the associated physical burden. Michigan AgrAbility is now able to extend this service to Spanish-speaking farmers to help them do their jobs easier and with less pain. A full article on this program can be found [here](#).

Submitted by Haley TenHarmsel

September 2021

Missouri

MU Extension specialists and Show-Me Farm Safety collaborative partners spent 12 days handing out MO AgrAbility health awareness materials, behavioral/mental health resources, and agricultural safety prevention tips at the 2021 Missouri State Fair. The State Fair served as an open agricultural classroom that provided Missouri producers, agricultural leaders, and fairgoers opportunities to learn strategies to improve their family's health and safety tips about how to safely work around their farm.

Missouri was buzzed with the arrival of their Slovenian AZ hives. AZ hive design eliminates all lifting by the beekeepers. This hive also works from the rear. The rear door arrangement permits a much less intrusive inspection of the hive, allowing access to all parts of the hive easily and immediately. When working the hive from the back, the beekeeper can stand or sit, providing a safer, better fit for beekeepers with disabilities. Heroes to Hives is co-sponsored by USDA NIFA grant projects: MO AgrAbility, MO Beginning Farmers and Ranchers Development Project, and 2020 North Central Farm and Ranch Stress Alliance Network Center.

Joni Harper, County Engagement Specialist in Agriculture and Environment, was a speaker during the August 24th National AgrAbility panel presentation on State/Regional Programs for farmer veterans. Joni shared information and a short video about the initiative to assist 289 veteran farmers and their dependents with disabilities through Missouri's Heroes to Hives beekeeper program.

Missouri AgrAbility staff also provided on-the-farm agricultural education and services directed at accommodating disability in farm operations for farmers with disabilities and families who are engaged in farming by facilitating three fee-for-service comprehensive onsite farmstead assessments.

Submitted by Karen Funkenbusch



University of Missouri-Kansas City School of Pharmacy, a Missouri AgrAbility collaborator, provided rural wellness outreach and education at the Missouri State Fair on Aug 14th in the MO Ag Theater. Missourians from 44 counties were reached through the effort. Twenty individuals were educated about farm safety and health.



Pharm to Farm and Missouri AgrAbility flyers were distributed.

Wellness screenings and referrals to follow up care were also provided, including diabetes risk assessment for 52 individuals, with 5 referrals.



Seventy-seven individuals were screened for blood pressure with 13 referrals, at a value of over \$6500. Emergency services were called to triage one participant. 118 families were educated about OTC Med Safety education, Medication List Wallet Cards were provided, and Dispose RX kits and substance use disorder prevention education was provided to 83 individuals.

Submitted by Kelly Cochran

Missouri AgrAbility marketing was part of the BIA-MO exhibit at the

Redbird Rookies Health Fair hosted by St. Louis Cardinals Care. BIA-MO volunteers Kitty Newsham, PhD, and Angie Nowak, RN, shared AgrAbility information and brain injury safety activity sheets with youth and their families. This health and safety fair was held on Saturday, August 14, 2021, with an estimated 700 visitors to the informational booths.



Missouri AgrAbility is featured in the Brain Injury Association of Missouri (BIA-MO) Annual Statewide Conference Registration Brochure as the Resources in Rural Missouri track sponsor. Marketing of Missouri AgrAbility is also featured in the Fall 2021 issue of the BIA-MO Connections newsletter. These publications will reach more than 3,000 current and potential AgrAbility clients and agricultural, vocational, and rehabilitation professions who serve farmers and ranchers.

Submitted by Maureen Cunningham

September 2021

Nebraska

Nebraska AgrAbility staff will be participating in Niagara University's Emergency Management Disability Awareness Training program in Nebraska in November 2021. The premise of the training is to address the ongoing challenges, misperceptions, inappropriate responses, and lack of ADA compliance as it relates to individuals with disabilities. Funded through a grant from the Nebraska Council on Developmental Disabilities, the program will provide strategies, resources, tools, and guidance to ensure proper and appropriate planning, preparedness, response, and recovery specific to persons with disabilities and access and functional needs.

In May 2021, the SILO movie was made available virtually to families and youth participants of the Fillmore County Extension Youth Ag Safety Day. A community-wide viewing is being planned in Geneva late September. The AgrAbility project is also preparing to share the link and farm safety information at fall outreach events with AgrAbility consumers and the project's advisory council members. Funding for the movie screening was made possible through contributions from Nebraska Extension-Fillmore County and Nebraska AgrAbility via the University of Nebraska Extension's USDA award. [Watch the Trailer](#) (2 min). Disaster strikes in a small American farm town when a teenage boy becomes the victim of a grain entrapment. As corn becomes quicksand inside of a 50-foot silo, the town locals must put aside their deeply rooted differences to save him from drowning in the grain they harvest.

Submitted by Susan Harris

September 2021

Ohio

Ohio AgrAbility staff spent much of the summer on outreach to farmers and gardeners, presenting "Ergonomic Gardening", and "Ohio AgrAbility - Assistive Technology to Keep You Productive" workshops. OAP staff were very excited to present a live workshop to a live, in-person audience (for the first time in more than a year-and-a-half) in August.



Ohio AgrAbility is proud to announce that the Caregiver Support Network is hosting a free webinar October 8, 2 pm EDT: "Let's talk about Caregivers and Mental Health". OSU Extension Behavioral Health Field Specialist Bridget Britton will present about improving mental health in rural and other limited-access areas, how to concentrate on self-care when it is difficult to get

away from the home or farm, how to recognize mental health needs when services are limited and looking into local resources when there is a lack of them in rural communities. Registration for the free webinar is available [here](#).

Submitted by Laura Akgerman

September 2021

Pennsylvania

August brought the return of Ag Progress Days to Penn State University's research fields. The three-day event is Pennsylvania's largest outdoor agricultural exposition with over 400 exhibitors from the United States and Canada. It was great to see Life Essentials at the event.



The weather kept staff on their toes - one minute raining, the next sunny, then pouring rain - but good interactions and connections were made during the in-person event. AgrAbility PA joined several health service providers and ag safety organizations inside the Rural Health and Safety tent. [Learn more.](#)

Submitted by Kendra Martin

September 2021

Tennessee



TN AgrAbility with University of TN Institute of Agriculture celebrated TN Farm Bureau's happy 100th birthday! 100 years ago, a group of farmers gathered with the hopes of creating an organization to better the lives of farmers and rural people in Tennessee. 100 years later, TN Farm Bureau is the largest Farm Bureau in the nation and continues to be the strong voice for Tennessee agriculture. TN Farm Bureau is a big supporter of TN

AgrAbility.

Happy [#NationalFarmersMarketWeek](#) (August 1-7, 2021)! TN Department of Ag promotes buying local. Whether it is one of AgrAbility's farmers or the favorite local Farmers Market, staff look for and support the TN signs like Pick TN Products and National Farmer Veteran Coalition/Homegrown By Heroes.

There was another session of TN New Farmer Academy this month, starting with farm tours with the TN State University East TN New Farmer Academy where farmers learned additional information about niche crops, agritourism, Community Supported Ag (CSA), organic production, and AgrAbility services. A HUGE Thank you to the great hosts: Knox County Extension, Oakes Daylilies Farm, and the team at the UT Organic Research Farm.



Another successful grain bin safety/rescue awareness training was held in the Upper Cumberland TN counties on the beautiful Catesa Farms in Upper Cumberland TN. Fifty-four farmers and rescue personnel went through 4 hours of classroom work and 4 hours of hands-on grain bin rescue training. The training was coordinated by TN AgrAbility and taught by TN Association of Rescue Squads. There were 20 Turtle Plastics rescue tubes and five Great Wall rescue tubes distributed throughout eight counties. Frank Averella, a member of the Sparta-White County Volunteer Rescue Squad in a rural part of Tennessee stated, "As members of a special operations team, we constantly train and hone our skills in technical rescue and are ready to respond to emergencies at a moment's notice. Recently, we were invited to participate in the Grain Bin Rescue Awareness Training Class promoted by the TN AgrAbility Program, UT TSU Extension, the Tennessee Association of Rescue Squads, and other very important partners. The skills and knowledge that we obtained in this class will change our and others' lives forever. Anyone who works in the farming industry, those that support that network, and those who are first responders that would respond to an emergency involving agricultural type rescues need this class. Understanding dangers that you have never considered before, keeping your employees, team members, and family safe, having resources ready to go, and learning fundamental steps to mitigate an emergency are some of the skills you will learn. Also, not only will you learn new skills, but your pre-existing skill sets in your specific trades will be reinforced. Personally, I have witnessed when farmers and first responders come together, sharing their passions and eagerness to help, great things will be accomplished. I am proud to say we are all now a part of an exclusive group that we hope to only grow, and share with others, which in turn will save countless lives for generations to come. In other words: Take this Class. Yours and other lives depend on it!"

A HUGE THANK YOU to UT TSU Extension agents in Smith, Macon,



Trousdale, Overton, Putnam, DeKalb, White, and Van Buren counties for going way beyond in getting sponsorships for the rescue tubes and organizing the training. Could not have happened without them. A HUGE THANK YOU to Catesa Farms for hosting the event and numerous sponsors. The event ended with homegrown Catesa Farms watermelon. Watch [grain bin training on Facebook](#). See [NCTV report on grain bin training here](#).

Meet Emily Webb, a TN AgrAbility farmer. She and her family operate a beef cattle farm raising straw and hay and riding horses. She has had three back and two knee surgeries. She is like the Energizer Bunny; she keeps on going. Looking behind her while driving the tractor was a big problem for Emily. In order to ease the pain at the end of the day, TN AgrAbility purchased a utility vehicle mirror for the Kubota m6040. "The mirror helps a great deal because I don't have to twist and turn to see what is behind me when driving the tractor. I can sit back and stay relaxed and see everything with the mirror," stated Emily.



Submitted by TN AgrAbility

September 2021

Texas

The Texas AgrAbility course "Working with Farmers & Ranchers with Disabilities: An AgrAbility Resource for Occupational Therapy Practitioners" is now available online and offers CEU credits. The course is designed to educate occupational therapy practitioners on how to improve OT services provided to farmers and ranchers with a disability. Modules cover assessment, agriculture tasks, hazard safety, common conditions, ergonomics, assistive technology, modifications, and resources. Check it out [here](#).



Staff provided an educational webinar on Vocational Rehabilitation services in collaboration with Disability Rights Texas. The webinar covers support for clients while working with Vocational Rehab and policy regarding self-employment. The webinar recording can be viewed [here](#).

Submitted by Makenzie Thomas

September 2021

Washington

Due to COVID numbers on the rise, the WSAP stakeholder meeting August 31st became a virtual meeting with 14 in attendance with representation from all WSAP partners as well as Pacific Northwest Agricultural Safety & Health Center (PNASH) and DVR. Grant objectives were discussed, as was how to improve DVR awareness of AgrAbility services, and ideas were shared to meet deliverables.



With the return of mask mandates and the rising COVID numbers, WSAP has been distributing silicone mask inserts at events. Placed beneath the mask, these inserts are designed to keep masks from touching the face and can make it feel easier to breath. Able to be ordered in bulk, these make for great low-cost AT solutions for farmers and farm workers, especially while doing high cardiovascular activities.

Submitted by Kristen Hinton-VanValkenburg

September 2021

AgrAbility for Africa



Lake Victoria, a freshwater lake that supports the livelihood of over 40 million people in the region, and the Nile River fishing industries in East Africa are experiencing hard times as a result of climate change, illegal fishing practices, marine plastic waste, and eco-system degradation from industrial and farm waste pollution. In the quest to save the industries, Agrability for

Africa staff have teamed up with Uganda Junior Rangers (Uganda), and VeryNile (Egypt) under the River Nile coalition to save the lake and the river by enhancing promotion of best fishing practices, accessible aquaculture, waste management behavior change, health information promotion (including hygiene), and community cleanup events starting on the 18th of September.

Activities will be ongoing throughout the week, targeting farmers markets, island, and shoreline communities. The reason behind AgrAbility for Africa's involvement is that the social cost is highest for people with disabilities involved in the industry, as they are affected most by climate change and reduced fish stock.

Experiences of AgrAbility for Africa staff have taught them that there is great need to enhance farm productivity for their clients, and to identify and promote alternative employment opportunities for farmers, ranchers, and farm workers faced with disabilities. Through collaborations, the AgrAbility for Africa staff endeavors to achieve that.

Currently, the team is actively engaged with the founders of [Heroes to Hives](#) out of Michigan to develop a regional beehive program to fill the gap. Under the arrangement, Heroes to Hives and AgrAbility for Africa are looking at introducing and promoting low-cost accessible beehive technologies suited for people with physical limitations.



Submitted by Mutumba Faisal

September 2021

Upcoming Events

Name Lincoln University Small Farm Conference 2021: Growing your Goals
Dates September 7, 14, 21, and 28, starting at 6:30 pm
City, State Zoom and Facebook Live Tuesdays
Contact Info/Web link For further information, [click here](#).

Name Safeguarding children who live, work & play on farms
Dates September 14, 21, and 28, 2021
City, State Virtual Event Online
Contact Info/Web link <https://marshfieldresearch.org/cash-workshop>

Name NCRCRD Webinar: Using Q Methodology to Measure Rural Entrepreneurial Perceptions & Overview of Homegrown: Entrepreneurship in Your Community
Dates September 16, 2021
City, State Zoom Webinar online from 3:00-4:00 p.m. ET
Contact Info/Web link For registration and further information, [click here](#).

Name PCSGA Shellfish Conference & Tradeshow
Dates September 20-22, 2021
City, State Virtual event online
Contact Info/Web link <https://pcsga.org/shellfish-conference-2021/>

Name Farm Science Review
Dates September 21-23, 2021
City, State London, Ohio
Contact Info/Web link <https://fsr.osu.edu/>

Name Farm Aid 2021
Dates September 25, 2021
City, State Hartford, Connecticut

Contact Info/Web link <https://www.farmaid.org/festival/about-the-festival/>

Name World Dairy Expo
Dates September 28 - October 2, 2021
City, State Madison, Wisconsin
Contact Info/Web link <https://worlddairyexpo.com/>

Name Let's Talk About Caregivers and Mental Health
Dates October 8, 2021, at 2:00 p.m. EDT
City, State Online
Contact Info/Web link Register for free at go.osu.edu/caregiver2021_mental_health

Name Sunbelt Ag Expo
Dates October 19-21, 2021
City, State Moultrie, Georgia
Contact Info/Web link <https://sunbeltexpo.com/>

Name Eastern Regional Farmer Veteran Coalition Conference
Dates November 17-19, 2021
City, State Knoxville, Tennessee
Contact Info/Web link agrability@tennessee.edu

Name MSU AGR Beef Preview Show
Dates February 11-13, 2022
City, State East Lansing, Michigan
Contact Info/Web link <https://www.facebook.com/AgrBeefPreviewShow/>