

AgrAbility e·Note

January 2022

A monthly update for AgrAbility projects and friends of AgrAbility

National AgrAbility Project News

NTW Updates

Happy New Year! If you have been putting it off, it is time to start thinking about the NTW. Here are some things for you to do:

- Register for the NTW. You can click [HERE](#) to go to the NTW website. There you will find more detailed information and the registration link.
- Reserve your hotel room. You can click [HERE](#) to go to the hotel page on the NTW website. There you will find more information and the link to reserve your room. **The room block closes on February 10th**, so don't miss out.
- Do you know of someone that might like to be an exhibitor or a sponsor? Send them this link for the [exhibitor-sponsor Google form](#), or send their contact information to Tess- tmckeel@goodwillfingerlakes.org.
- Put together a SRAP raffle basket and/or collect auctions items. Both activities help us to bring farmer clients to the NTW.



If you have any questions about the NTW, contact Tess: tmckeel@goodwillfingerlakes.org.

AgrAbility all-staff virtual meeting: save the date for Wednesday, March 2 at 2:00 p.m. EST.

The NAP is beginning monthly Zoom sessions on a wide variety of topics. Consider joining us for a discussion of marketing and media January 19 at 2:00 p.m. EST. Contact Paul Jones jonesp@purdue.edu for details.

AgrAbility/North Central FRSAN webinar: "Tensions of Farm Succession," Tuesday, February 22 at 3:00 p.m. EST. Details coming via email soon.

The next AgrAbility regional workshop is scheduled for Columbus, OH, June 28-30, 2022, at the Hilton Garden Inn Columbus Easton. Planning is just beginning, so more information will be coming.

NAP would love to host a regional workshop with you. If you think that you might be interested, please contact Tess tmckeel@goodwillfingerlakes.org or JoBeth jbrath@goodwillfingerlakes.org for more information.



A Personal Air Quality Monitor is a handheld or wearable battery-powered unit that tracks, measures, records, and transmits surrounding atmospheric condition data to one's electronic device (e.g., smartphone, computer). It warns workers with respiratory impairments if they are entering a dangerous environment for their lungs. The user can then, in real time, read the results (even be audio-alerted) and take protective action, if warranted. Among the pollutants that the monitor detects are carbon and nitrogen oxides, vehicle-exhaust emissions, dust, pollen, soot, mold, and a wide range of volatile organic compounds (primarily in gaseous form).

State and Regional AgrAbility Project News

Alaska

The Alaska AgrAbility Project is partnering with the Kenai Peninsula Soil & Water Conservation District to bring a seven-part educational series to gardeners and farmers statewide. [More](#)

The week of December 6th, DeShana York attended the virtual Young Fisherman's Summit hosted by Alaska Sea Grant. [More](#)

Staff also presented at a provider connect meeting hosted by Help Me Grow Alaska with attendees from the University of Alaska Anchorage and Providence Alaska Medical Center. Assistive technology for employment and community living was discussed for rural Alaskan living.



California



California AgrAbility staff attended a presentation hosted by UC Davis Health called "What is Positive Aging and How Do We Do It? ." It was presented by Dr. Helen Kales, a geriatric psychiatrist and researcher with the UC Davis Health Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Health Sciences. [More](#)

California AgrAbility staff has begun the "Question, Persuade, Response" (QPR) gatekeeper suicide prevention trainer certification course. QPR trainings will be offered to community healthcare clinics, county agencies, and other organization that offer support to farmers, ranchers, and farmworkers throughout California. [More](#)



California AgrAbility has recently committed to partnering with the Center for Land Based Learning (CLBL) to participate in and support the CLBL's 2021 application for the USDA AgVets grant titled "Enhancing Success of Military Veterans in Agriculture through Comprehensive Training and Wrap-Around Support" from 2021 to 2023. [More](#)

Colorado

The Western Region Agricultural Stress Assistance Program (WRASAP) small grant program seeks to fund projects that educate agricultural support personnel and reduce farm stress or suicidality among farmers and

ranchers. Dr. James Craig, rural rehabilitation specialist with the Colorado AgrAbility Project (CAP), has parlayed this opportunity into creating the Colorado AgrAbility College of Agricultural Sciences (AGSCI) website. [More](#)



Georgia



Georgia AgrAbility traveled to Jekyll Island on December 5-7th to attend the 2021 Georgia Farm Bureau Conference. [More](#)

The Southern Regional Farm and Ranch Stress Assistance Network (FRSAN) hosted a virtual conference bringing together 15 different state partners across the United States. [More](#)

Georgia AgrAbility partners with the Shepherd Center, one of the leading brain and spinal injury hospitals in the nation, to provide services to farmers. Our liaison at the Shepherd Center lets patients who are farmers know about AgrAbility services and makes the connection with AgrAbility staff. [More](#)



Indiana



Staff from Indiana AgrAbility's new nonprofit partner, Easterseals Crossroads, joined the staff at Purdue for a planning meeting on December 8. Leading Easterseals Crossroads' efforts are Brian Norton, director of assistive technology, and Lisa Becker, assistive technology technician. [More](#)

The Indiana Farm Equipment and Technology Show returned to an in-person event on December 14-16 at the Grand Park Sports Complex in Westfield, Indiana. [More](#)

Kansas

Finding new partners and strategies to reach veterans of all ages is a priority for all AgrAbility projects. Audiologists and rehabilitation staff at the Dole Veterans Affairs (VA) Medical Center and the Veterans Affairs Medical Center in Topeka met with Kansas AgrAbility staff to discuss opportunities to promote services to Kansas veterans. [More](#)

KAP staff provided education on AgrAbility services to partner, SAVE Farm (Service Member Agricultural Vocation Education) graduates. [More](#)

Maine

Maine AgrAbility is launching 2022's Boots-2-Bushels: Boot Camp for Market Gardeners and Farmers. [More](#)

Staff were excited to share information about AgrAbility and farming issues in the winter weather. Be sure to [check it out here](#).

Michigan

Michigan AgrAbility held its annual farmer panel meeting via Zoom on December 14. The team discussed responses to the annual survey and case closure surveys as well as public outreach on social media and via mailings and phone call inquiries. The demonstration site for farm assistive technology and the Michigan State University College of Engineering Design Day projects were also discussed.

Missouri

Missouri AgrAbility focused its social media efforts on program promotion for MU Extension and partner programs, agricultural safety, and health resources for holidays. [More](#)

Emily Doosing, county engagement specialist in 4-H youth development, MU Extension in Shannon County, launched *Save Your Brain Leader's Guide*, authored by Missouri 4-H, Brain Injury Association of Missouri, and Missouri AgrAbility. [More](#)

"Farm Stress Management Creates a Better Life," an article written by Susan Jaster was published in the [Extension Today newsletter](#), a monthly newsletter that highlights Cooperative Extension and provides updates across the 1890 land-grant system. [More](#)

Missouri AgrAbility marketing reached 75 school nurses at the Coordinated School Health Conference on December 1-2. [More](#)

Brain injury resource bags with Missouri AgrAbility marketing materials including *Brain Injury Recovery Step by Step* brochure, *Brain Injury Association of America Caregivers Guide*, and a Missouri AgrAbility *Journal of Hope* were provided to Rusk Rehabilitation Center in Columbia, Missouri, for distribution to AgrAbility customers.

Nebraska

Lincoln Farm Expo, Nebraska Cattleman's Association Conference, and Gateway Farm Expo were all events where Nebraska AgrAbility was represented in December. Staff members presented in breakout sessions at the Lincoln Farm Expo. [More](#)

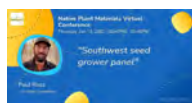


A team member presented at Nebraska FFA's Pathways to Careers (P2C) Conference in Kearney, Nebraska. [More](#)

Check out [this story](#) written by Kerry Hoffschneider about a Nebraska AgrAbility client!

Staff members want to take the time to say thanks to the National team for their support throughout the year and the learning activities provided. Staff look forward to seeing everyone in March. Happy new year!

New Mexico



New Mexico AgrAbility Manager Paul Ross presented on a regional panel of native plant material producers in January.

North Carolina

NC AgrAbility Partnership participated at the Minority Farmer and Landowner Conference on December 2-3 in Rocky Mount, NC. As an exhibitor, NC AgrAbility had the opportunity to interact with about 260

attendees. [More](#)



Ohio



As Ohio AgrAbility staff reflected on 2021, there was much to be grateful for: Ohio farmers and farm families; AT vendors who exceed expectations in creativity and ingenuity, service to farmers, their ability and willingness to problem solve and find solutions to farmer needs;

[More](#)

Pennsylvania

Happy New Year to AgrAbility colleagues across the country! The staff at AgrAbility PA hopes everyone has a safe, healthy year ahead.

December brought record-setting warm temperatures across the state. It was over 60 degrees on the last day of the year! The silver lining is that farm assessments continued forward without weather disruptions.

Dairy farmer and AgrAbility PA customer Chelsi Shultz shared her story with *Farm and Dairy*. Shultz was diagnosed with shoulder impingement in both shoulders. "It was all of that range of motion using your shoulder, and you use your shoulders in most things," she said. [More](#)



AgrAbility PA's staff held a team retreat to discuss opportunities and initiatives related to increasing customer capacity, setting benchmarks for service, and achieving new goals associated with supporting farmers and ag workers with a disability or long-term health condition. [More](#)

South Dakota

South Dakota's Tatanka Ki Owetu, the Renewal AgrAbility Project received a joint grant from CoBank and Farm Credit Services to augment its Tribal Local Foods and AgrAbility programs on the Pine Ridge Reservation in South Dakota. [More](#)

Tatanka Ki Owetu AgrAbility team on Pine Ridge has been busy in 2021 and remains so in the first week of 2022. The team never stopped working in the field. Due to persistent, intergenerational poverty, access to technology and the internet wasn't an answer during Covid-19 for the team. [More](#)

Article of Interest: Please check out the article "[COVID-19 in Indigenous Communities: The Lived Experiences of Extension Educators](#)" by Hartmann, K. (2021) from the Journal of International Agricultural and Extension Education, 28(1). [More](#)

Tennessee

Happy 2022 from TN AgrAbility! - Second snow for Tennessee. Staff are on a roll!



TN AgrAbility attended the annual 2021 TN Farm Bureau Conference in



December. Those who visited the booth were presented a soap in a hose and opportunity to make a Christmas ornament.

TN AgrAbility will be seen rolling up and down the highways with a new grain bin training trailer, thanks to the sponsorship of TN Corn Board and TN Soybean Board. The trailer is equipped with all the necessary equipment for the TN grain bin safety/rescue awareness trainings... [More](#)



Texas

The BattleGround to Breaking Ground program graduates seven members and is welcoming 20 new participants in January. The majority of participants have service-connected disabilities and utilize Texas AgrAbility services during the program and after starting their farms and ranches.

Texas AgrAbility staff members Makenzie Thomas, Cheryl Grenwelge, and Faye McGuire will be attending the AgrAbility NTW in March and presenting on working with capstone students to further AgrAbility services for farmers and ranchers with disabilities.

Utah

AgrAbility of Utah was excited to attend and set up a booth at the Utah Cattlemen's Association Winter Convention and Trade Show on Dec. 2 in Salt Lake City. Staff visited with and explained AgrAbility to many of the 120 ranchers who attended.

On Dec. 7, AgrAbility staff attended an all-terrain power wheelchair demonstration on the campus of Utah State University in Logan, UT. The event was coordinated by the Utah Assistive Technology Program and a video of the demonstration can be found [here](#).

AgrAbility of Utah staff met online with staff from the Utah State Office of Rehabilitation on Dec. 16 to address any barriers and learn more about each other's organization.

Virginia

AgrAbility Virginia is currently working with 28 farmer clients at various levels of engagement and need.

AgrAbility Virginia staff will be exhibiting at the Virginia Association for Biological Farming conference in Roanoke, Virginia, January 22-24.

Three hundred and thirty letters with brochures were mailed to all K-12 agriculture teacher positions across the state of Virginia the week of January 10th. [More](#)

AgrAbility Virginia program partner Easterseals UCP launched a JustGiving campaign to raise funds for the Assistive Technology Fund. [More](#)

Washington

The Washington State AgrAbility Project (WSAP) coordinator hosted a booth at the WA Dairy Federation Conference and Trade Show in Grand Mound, WA, December 6-8. [More](#)

WSAP worked with WA Farm Bureau to provide an AT solution for a client to strap and wrap pallets.

Staff are planning a series of workshops with partner Northwest Access Fund. These workshops are slated for March and will cover the program, AT options, and financial knowledge and tools to access AT.

WSAP hired Cherry Creek Media to launch a three-month digital native ad campaign to surface new potential clients and to promote the program. WSAP is very pleased with the first month's results and looking forward to upcoming results.

Staff staffed an AgrAbility booth at the [NW Cherry Growers Cherry Institute](#) January 7 in Yakima, WA.

Wisconsin

Wisconsin hopes everyone had happy holidays! Staff had a busy December attending the Wisconsin Farm Bureau Federation trade show. While attending, they were able to meet up with the new Wisconsin Farmer Veteran Coalition and discuss ways to support each other.

In January, AgrAbility of WI will be attending the Wisconsin Agri Business Classic, and staff look forward to attending the Wisconsin Corn and Soy Expo in early February.

International AgrAbility Network News

AgrAbility for Africa

Religions in many parts of Africa have well-established grassroots structures and are still growing with momentous force, with different religious establishments running different practical projects. Since December 2021, AgrAbility for Africa has opened discussions with the different leaderships to explore ways of integrating AgrAbility's services into their different religious community projects to expand outreach. [More](#)



Early intervention can help children to make the most of abilities and skills developed during the early years in life. Through partnerships, the AgrAbility for Africa team is working with different organizations to make various therapies accessible to children in need of them. [More](#)

Staff Changes and Recognition

New Mexico

New Mexico AgrAbility welcomed three staff changes over the past three months. They are bringing in ruminant nutrition expert Robert Haagevoort, occupational therapy instructor Mary T. Hill, and Learning Farm manager Paul Ross.

South Dakota

The Pine Ridge team would like to welcome Theodore Pourier Jr., Chris Valandra, Bryce

Valandra, Elizabeth Charging Crow, and Jackie Solano to our team. Ted, Chris, and Bryce were recently promoted to full-time AgrAbility assistive-technology support technicians. Elizabeth will be coming on in January as a part-time assistive-technology support technician, and Jackie will also be joining in January as a program assistant to the AgrAbility project directors.

Texas

Texas AgrAbility is currently joined by an occupational therapy doctoral student from University of St. Augustine for Health Sciences. Maggie Mencer will be conducting a qualitative study on the efficacy of the AgrAbility course for occupational therapists. She will also be joining the team to learn about serving clients with disabilities through worksite assessments and assistive technology recommendations.

AgrAbility in the News

Click titles below for news stories featuring AgrAbility projects .

- [AgrAbility helps farmers overcome health conditions to continue farming](#) (AgrAbility for Pennsylvanians)
- [Penn State secures funding to continue assisting farmers with disabilities](#) (AgrAbility for Pennsylvanians)
- [Tribal AgrAbility Project Addresses Disabilities While Meeting Cultural Needs](#) (SD Tatanka Ki Owetu, the Renewal AgrAbility Project)
- [TN Corn Promotion Council Partners with TN Soybean Association to Support Grain Bin Safety and Rescue Training](#) (Tennessee AgrAbility Project)
- [Tennessee AgrAbility Continues To Help Farmers, Ranchers](#) (Tennessee AgrAbility Project)
- [Agency: National AgrAbility Project](#) (National AgrAbility Project and all SRAPs)
- [Seeds -- Ranch life is in his heart](#) (Nebraska AgrAbility)
- [Illinois AgrAbility celebrates 30 years of helping farmers, families](#) (Illinois AgrAbility Unlimited)
- [New Funds, Partner Bolster Tennessee AgrAbility Assistance Program](#) (Tennessee AgrAbility Project)
- [Women in Ag event](#) (AgrAbility)
- [COVID brings added stress to disabled Maine farmers already facing winter challenges](#) (Maine AgrAbility)

Other News

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

- [Farmer Veteran Coalition Fellowship Fund Application Open through February 14th](#)
- [USDA, Federation of Southern Cooperatives Renew Partnership Supporting Underserved Landowners](#)
- [New poll shows encouraging signs of reduced stigma around farmer mental health](#)
- [Award-Winning Speakers Headline 2022 Cattle Industry Convention](#)
- [NMPF: USDA's Dairy Margin Coverage program now open for 2022 enrollment](#)
- [New Virtual Platform for Farmers to Learn and Share Ideas to Improve Their Soil, Land, and Bottom Lines](#)
- [Fact Sheet: Making the Case for Solar Grazing](#)
- [Organic producers have more time to apply for pandemic aid](#)
- [2022 Junior Master Gardener National Leader Training Conference set Feb. 21-23](#)
- [Overcoming Adversity: The Power of Showing Livestock](#)

Upcoming Events

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

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

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January 2022

Alaska

The Alaska AgrAbility Project is partnering with the Kenai Peninsula Soil & Water Conservation District to bring a seven-part educational series to gardeners and farmers statewide. A variety of topics are being explored, and the target audience is new gardeners and farmers. Topics include: Soil composition, composting, biochar and enhancing soil nutrients, small woodlot management, integrated pest management (weeds and insects), cover crops, AKAgrAbility resources and assistive technology, as well as conservation programs and resources. Other agencies contributing to this series are the State of Alaska Division of Forestry, Palmer Soil & Water Conservation District, and USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service. The series will also highlight some farmers and their practical applications around some of the series topics in the state. [See flier](#) for more details and registration information.



The week of December 6th, DeShana York attended the virtual Young Fisherman's Summit hosted by Alaska Sea Grant. She was able to network and make connections within the commercial fishing industry to continue to expand AKAgrAbility awareness and services to this industry base. There were excellent presentations and information pertaining to safety and injury prevention.

Submitted by DeShana York

January 2022

California



California AgrAbility staff attended a presentation hosted by UC Davis Health called "What is Positive Aging and How Do We Do It? ." It was presented by Dr. Helen Kales, a geriatric psychiatrist and researcher with the UC Davis Health Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Health Sciences. Dr. Kales discussed mental health and aging, the concept of positive aging and what it takes to age successfully. Special emphasis was placed on the factors that increase the risk of dementia later in life and lifestyle factors in early, mid, and late life, to lessen the risk for developing dementia

later in life.



California AgrAbility staff has begun the "Question, Persuade, Response" (QPR) gatekeeper suicide prevention trainer certification course. QPR trainings will be offered to community healthcare clinics, county agencies, and other organization that offer support to farmers, ranchers, and farmworkers throughout California. The goal of these trainings is to bring awareness of the increasing rates of suicide in the agricultural community and how to diminish them.

California AgrAbility has recently committed to partnering with the Center for Land Based Learning (CLBL) to participate in and support the CLBL's 2021 application for the USDA AgVets grant titled "Enhancing Success of Military Veterans in Agriculture through Comprehensive Training and Wrap-Around Support" from 2021 to 2023. California AgrAbility will be hosting educational presentations for CLBL staff and program participants about AgrAbility services and service-related and general disabilities in the context of agriculture.



Submitted by California AgrAbility Project

January 2022

Colorado

The Western Region Agricultural Stress Assistance Program (WRASAP) small grant program seeks to fund projects that educate agricultural support personnel and reduce farm stress or suicidality among farmers and ranchers. Dr. James Craig, rural rehabilitation specialist with the Colorado AgrAbility Project (CAP), has parlayed this opportunity into creating the Colorado AgrAbility College of Agricultural Sciences (AGSCI) website. Currently in development, the site will provide agricultural producers real-time access to a wealth of support for all topics germane to the CAP, including farm stress and behavioral health. While much content will be informational, Craig hopes to incorporate more interactive, dynamic features over time, such as workshops, peer group postings, client success stories, podcasts, polls, and surveys. It will also serve as a vehicle for behavioral health referrals through involvement from CAP's behavioral health specialist, Chad Reznicek. Finally, the platform will serve as an additional space for WRASAP partners to contribute applicable materials and event announcements.



Craig credits CAP's lineage of building relationships throughout the state as a springboard for the website's potential impact. Dr. Robert Fetsch's studies correlating assistive technology services for disabled farmers and ranchers with higher levels of hopefulness also informed Craig's philosophy. He noted, "What we found when taking quality of life surveys was that this whole thing of hope really worked very well to alleviate a lot of problems. So, our approach to mental health was to take care of physical needs first to alleviate immediate stress, then focus on mental health issues." WRASAP's baseline survey results also confirmed farmers' preference for virtual engagement. Given many farmers' and ranchers' stoicism and concern about stigma, Craig stressed the value of a mechanism that they "can feel safe on, they can trust, can maintain confidentiality, and work on their own time schedule."

While Craig will manage the content and framework, a website developer has been enlisted to ensure professional presentation, intuitive accessibility, and optimum exposure. Once it goes live, the website's existence will be conveyed through CAP's listserv of approximately 700 subscribers, newsletters, and email blasts.

Submitted by Jim Craig

January 2022

Georgia



Georgia AgrAbility traveled to Jekyll Island on December 5-7th to attend the 2021 Georgia Farm Bureau Conference. The conference has members from all over the state attend to hear about upcoming policy changes and new commodity information and to connect with Georgia's agricultural organizations and agencies. Georgia AgrAbility has attended the conference as an exhibitor for many years and gets multiple client referrals as a result of the convention.

The Southern Regional Farm and Ranch Stress Assistance Network (FRSAN) hosted a virtual conference bringing together 15 different state partners across the United States. Georgia AgrAbility had a chance to co-present with Tennessee AgrAbility about AgrAbility as a whole. Rebecca Brightwell and Eileen Legault showcased the importance of AgrAbility to help reduce stress in the farming population and highlight the work that AgrAbility is doing with veterans transitioning into agriculture.

Georgia AgrAbility partners with the Shepherd Center, one of the leading brain and spinal injury hospitals in the nation, to provide services to farmers. Our liaison at the Shepherd Center lets patients who are farmers know about AgrAbility services and makes the connection with AgrAbility staff. Staff was able to visit with two farmers at the Shepherd Center in December to let them know more about AgrAbility and the resources that are out there for their benefit.



Submitted by Whitney Paige Ostrander

January 2022

Indiana



Staff from Indiana AgrAbility's new nonprofit partner, Easterseals Crossroads, joined the staff at Purdue for a planning meeting on December 8. Leading Easterseals Crossroads' efforts are Brian Norton, director of assistive technology, and Lisa Becker, assistive technology technician. Indiana AgrAbility has collaborated for many years with Easterseals Crossroads, a major disability services organization based in Indianapolis and home of INDATA, Indiana's Assistive Technology Act Project. However, for the new AgrAbility grant cycle, the team is pleased to announce that Easterseals

Crossroads has become a formal partner.

Submitted by Paul Jones

The Indiana Farm Equipment and Technology Show returned to an in-person event on December 14-16 at the Grand Park Sports Complex in Westfield, Indiana. Indiana AgrAbility staff and volunteers staffed a display at the show, which included AgrAbility publications on arthritis, case studies, emergency preparedness, Life Essentials publications, and "Gearing Up for Safety" information. Staff also toured the show to make contact with vendors who have worked with Indiana Vocational Rehabilitation clients and to look for new products for The Toolbox Assistive Technology Database.

Submitted by Steve Swain

January 2022

Kansas

Finding new partners and strategies to reach veterans of all ages is a priority for all AgrAbility projects. Audiologists and rehabilitation staff at the Dole Veterans Affairs (VA) Medical Center and the Veterans Affairs Medical Center in Topeka met with Kansas AgrAbility staff to discuss opportunities to promote services to Kansas veterans. KAP staff provided examples of how technology and accommodations can help a veteran work safely with a hearing loss, balance problems, and memory issues to continue farming and ranching. KAP brochures are made available to veterans who obtain services through the VA audiology program or the head injury/TBI rehabilitation unit. VA staff will share informational brochures with KAP staff so farmers and ranchers who've served are able to be informed of all resources they have at their disposal.

KAP staff provided education on AgrAbility services to partner, SAVE Farm (Service Member Agricultural Vocation Education) graduates. The graduating veterans and their families were provided general information about SRAPs and available services to assist them in their new ventures. Some graduates intend to begin their agriculture careers growing mushrooms, raising chickens, and continuing to work at the SAVE Training Center in Riley, Kansas. KAP staff demonstrated and discussed devices to assist with avoiding secondary injury to hearing, vision, and orthopedic systems, along with tips and devices to support memory, working outside in the elements, and respiration. KAP staff continue to work with SAVE Farm on making their training facilities accessible for all students, staff, and visitors.

Submitted by Tawnie Larson

January 2022

Maine

Maine AgrAbility is launching 2022's Boots-2-Bushels: Boot Camp for Market Gardeners and Farmers. This program is supported by Maine AgrAbility, the Extension Risk Management Education (ERME) Program, Farm Credit East, Maine Organic Farmers and Gardeners Association (MOFGA), and local farms throughout Maine. There are 25 people signed up, of which 15 are veterans/family, for a total of 20 farms. Staff are welcoming new Mainers in transit from Hawaii and Florida, too!

Submitted by Lani Carlson

January 2022

Missouri

Missouri AgrAbility focused its social media efforts on program promotion for MU Extension and partner programs, agricultural safety, and health resources for holidays. Make sure to like and follow Missouri AgrAbility, @MOAgrAbility, on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), and [Instagram](#).

Emily Doosing, county engagement specialist in 4-H youth development, MU Extension in Shannon County, launched *Save Your Brain Leader's Guide*, authored by Missouri 4-H, Brain Injury Association of Missouri, and Missouri AgrAbility. The 46-page guide allows leaders to provide a general overview of traumatic brain injury (TBI) and delve into specific ways youth, ages 8-18, can help protect themselves from TBI, and it ties to Missouri state learning standards. The digital download of the *Save Your Brain Leader's Guide* can be download after ordering at <https://extension.missouri.edu/publications/lg820>.

"Farm Stress Management Creates a Better Life," an article written by Susan Jaster was published in the *Extension Today* newsletter (<http://1890aea.org/extension-today-newsletter>), a monthly newsletter that highlights Cooperative Extension and provides updates across the 1890 land-grant system. It is published by the Association of Extension Administrators and the marketing and communication committee. Mrs. Susan Jaster with Lincoln University Cooperative Extension Innovative Small Farmers' Outreach Program (LUCE ISFOP) also assists Missouri AgrAbility with facilitating direct onsite farmstead assessments for AgrAbility customers and their families, including veterans and their families. Susan is certified to teach "Weathering the Storm in Agriculture: How to Cultivate a Productive Mindset," a farm stress management program developed by Michigan State University Extension to teach participants to read signs of stress, and she is also a QPR gatekeeper! Susan is a talented professional making a lasting impact on the families MO AgrAbility serves.

Submitted by Tevin Uthlaut, Emily Doosing, and Karen Funkenbusch

Missouri AgrAbility marketing reached 75 school nurses at the Coordinated School Health Conference on December 1-2. Material distribution included *Save Your Brain* activity sheets for rural school nurses to share with teachers and use with students while in their offices.

Submitted by: Maureen Cunningham

January 2022

Nebraska

Lincoln Farm Expo, Nebraska Cattleman's Association Conference, and Gateway Farm Expo were all events where Nebraska AgrAbility was represented in December. Staff members presented in breakout sessions at the Lincoln Farm Expo. These events netted a referral and opportunities to visit with hundreds of ag producers, agency reps, and vendors - always worth the time!



A team member presented at Nebraska FFA's Pathways to Careers (P2C) Conference in Kearney, Nebraska. The FFA students attend the conference to learn about careers that they could possibly pursue in their future. The many backgrounds of AgrAbility staff were presented - from engineering and Extension to education and health sciences.

Submitted by Susan Harris

January 2022

North Carolina



NC AgrAbility Partnership participated at the Minority Farmer and Landowner Conference on December 2-3 in Rocky Mount, NC. As an exhibitor, NC AgrAbility had the opportunity to interact with about 260 attendees. Many were interested in receiving more information about the program and signed on to the listserv, and some were interested in receiving direct services for themselves or family members.

Submitted by Beatriz (Betty) Rodriguez

January 2022

Ohio



As Ohio AgrAbility staff reflected on 2021, there was much to be grateful for: Ohio farmers and farm families; AT vendors who exceed expectations in creativity and ingenuity, service to farmers, their ability and willingness to problem solve and find solutions to farmer needs; collaboration with colleagues at OSU Extension and Easterseals Greater Cincinnati, Ohio Farm Bureau, and stakeholders throughout Ohio; continued collaboration with

Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities, the state Voc Rehab agency, and their continued support of Ohio farmers; USDA NIFA for funding Ohio AgrAbility for four more years; colleagues at all of the SRAPs and NAP; the amazing Ohio AgrAbility team and the opportunity to continue the important work AgrAbility staff does every day.

Submitted by Laura Akgerman

January 2022

Pennsylvania

Dairy farmer and AgrAbility PA customer Chelsi Shultz shared her story with *Farm and Dairy*. Shultz was diagnosed with shoulder impingement in both shoulders. "It was all of that range of motion using your shoulder, and you use your shoulders in most things," she said. "It was a lot of pain." Shultz heard about the AgrAbility program and reached out for help. The program worked with her to find a solution - a carrier system - and find funding for it so she could milk without pain. It helped her avoid surgery and get back to work, and it's helped other people working on the farm avoid the health issues she's had. [Read more here.](#)



AgrAbility PA's staff held a team retreat to discuss opportunities and initiatives related to increasing customer capacity, setting benchmarks for service, and achieving new goals associated with supporting farmers and ag workers with a disability or long-term health condition. It coincided with the announcement from Penn State's College of Agricultural Sciences and Penn State Extension that the USDA-NIFA has awarded funds to Penn State to continue assisting farmers with disabilities. The announcement appeared in dozens of media outlets including agriculture-specific publications, newsletters, and social media. [Read more here.](#)

Submitted by Kendra Martin

January 2022

South Dakota - Tatanka Ki Owetu

South Dakota's Tatanka Ki Owetu, the Renewal AgrAbility Project received a joint grant from CoBank and Farm Credit Services to augment its Tribal Local Foods and AgrAbility programs on the Pine Ridge Reservation in South Dakota. Recently, year two of this grant was awarded and the project will be featured in CoBank's upcoming annual corporate giving report. This grant has allowed staff to expand their AgrAbility support technician team by two part-time positions.

Tatanka Ki Owetu AgrAbility team on Pine Ridge has been busy in 2021 and remains so in the first week of 2022. The team never stopped working in the field. Due to persistent, intergenerational poverty, access to technology and the internet wasn't an answer during Covid-19 for the team. Switching to webinars and Zoom meetings doesn't work when people don't have access. To meet the needs, the team focused on one-on-one direct education and assistance with clients at their home sites and meeting with clients outdoors, socially-distanced, and masked. With the onset of winter weather and temperatures, the team has now switched to phone check-ins and information sharing, yet also remains in the field, fabricating and installing low-cost assistive technology for their clients. Fabrication takes places either at the two partnering incubator-hubs which are the assistive-technology centers on Pine Ridge, or directly at the clients' sites. The focus on the prevention of secondary injuries only increases in the winter months as snow, ice, and sub-zero temperatures blanket the region. When temperatures recently dropped below zero with even harsher wind-chill factors of 35 below, the team chipped in to help transport badly needed hay to a double-amputee veteran's site. As mentioned above, the team has grown, and recruitment remains strong halfway into year four of the AgrAbility grant. The team will be attending the 2nd Annual Lakota Food Summit in Rapid City, SD, in February and attending the NTW in Madison, WI, in March.

Article of Interest: Please check out the article "[COVID-19 in Indigenous Communities: The Lived Experiences of Extension Educators](#)" by Hartmann, K. (2021) from the *Journal of International Agricultural and Extension Education*, 28(1). It does a good job of outlining the challenges facing tribal communities in the United States during the global Covid-19 pandemic.

Submitted by Jason Schoch

January 2022

Tennessee

TN AgrAbility will be seen rolling up and down the highways with a new grain bin training trailer, thanks to the sponsorship of TN Corn Board and TN Soybean Board. The trailer is equipped with all the necessary equipment for the TN grain bin safety/rescue awareness trainings coordinated by TN Association of Rescue Squads (TARS) and TN AgrAbility, plus, if needed for a grain bin rescue, its ready to roll. [Read more here.](#)



Submitted by Tennessee AgrAbility Project

January 2022

Virginia

Three hundred and thirty letters with brochures were mailed to all K-12 agriculture teacher positions across the state of Virginia the week of January 10th. To follow up on these letter introductions, AgrAbility Virginia Program Director Dr. Kim Niewolny will be presenting on AgrAbility Virginia at the 2022 Virginia Agriculture Education Winter Conference February 4-5 in Staunton, Virginia. Staff will also have an exhibit table during the conference.

AgrAbility Virginia program partner Easterseals UCP launched a JustGiving campaign to raise funds for the Assistive Technology Fund. This fund, housed within the non-profit partner's organization, will be used when farmer clients have limited resources and are unable to purchase needed assistive technologies. Here is the link with more information: <https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/agrability>

Submitted by Virginia AgrAbility Project

January 2022

Washington

The Washington State AgrAbility Project (WSAP) coordinator hosted a booth at the WA Dairy Federation Conference and Trade Show in Grand Mound, WA, December 6-8. Outreach at similar events this fall has resulted in multiple prospective clients WSAP looks forward to serving. WSAP is also distributing packets of outreach materials on the program to all 39 county Extension offices in the state in partnership with the WSU state-based agricultural suicide prevention program.

Submitted by Kristen Hinton-Vanvalkenburg

January 2022

AgrAbility for Africa

Religions in many parts of Africa have well-established grassroots structures and are still growing with momentous force, with different religious establishments running different practical projects. Since December 2021, AgrAbility for Africa has opened discussions with the different leaderships to explore ways of integrating AgrAbility's services into their different religious community projects to expand outreach. This should enable the entire communities to benefit from disability support services by making use of the vast size, reach, and parish structural "polity" service extensions of the various religious orders.



Early intervention can help children to make the most of abilities and skills developed during the early years in life. Through partnerships, the AgrAbility for Africa team is working with different organizations to make various therapies accessible to children in need of them. One such partnerships is between The

Federation of Horses in Education and Therapy International (HETI), Uganda Junior Rangers, and AgrAbility for Africa. Uganda Junior Rangers are providing the therapy services; AgrAbility for Africa provides initial assessments and recommendations; and The Federation of Horses in Education and Therapy International supports capacity expansions and program development. The collaboration is meant to enable early problem identification and timely therapy access for rural disadvantaged children. Rehabilitation is aimed at maintaining independence by tackling the disability before it worsens so as to help foster a whole set of personal strengths and skills that prepare children for adult life as farmers and farm workers.

Submitted by Mutumba Faisal

January 2022

Upcoming Events

Name Online Horticultural Therapy Certificate Program
Dates January 2022
City, State Online
Contact Dr. Derrick Stowell dstowell@tennessee.edu/
Info/Web link <https://plantsciences.tennessee.edu/horticulturaltherapy.../>

Name UT Farming Fundamentals
Dates January 2022
City, State Online
Contact <https://tinyurl.com/2p88bbpe>
Info/Web link

Name From the Ground Up!
Dates Tuesday evenings January 18 - March 1, 2022, 10:00-11:30 p.m. EST
City, State Online classes
Contact <https://alaska.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZ0vfu2ggjMiH9d6q9y3V1SA3OWmQS4nSw7P>
Info/Web link

Name (Tennessee) Master Farm Family Health and Wellness Program
Dates January 13, 20, 27; Feb. 3, 10, 17, 24; March 3, 2022
City, State Online
Contact tiny.utk.edu/mffhwregistration
Info/Web link

Name "Aching Hands and Stomped-On Feet: Simple Tools and Modifications for Farmers and Gardeners" at the Country Living Expo and Cattlemen's Winterschool
Dates January 28, 2022, at 12:00 Noon EST
City, State Online
Contact <https://extension.wsu.edu/skagit/countrylivingexpo/>
Info/Web link

Name Cattle Industry Convention & NCBA Trade Show
Dates February 1-3, 2022
City, State Houston, Texas

Contact Info/Web link <https://convention.ncba.org/general-information>

Name 2022 World Ag Expo

Dates February 8-10, 2022

City, State Tulare, California

Contact Info/Web link <https://www.worldagexpo.com/>

Name Michigan State University AGR Beef Preview Show

Dates February 11th – 13th, 2022

City, State East Lansing, Michigan

Contact Info/Web link <https://www.facebook.com/AgrBeefPreviewShow/>

Name 2022 OEFFA (Ohio Ecological Food & Farm Association) Conference

Dates February 12 Online; February 17-19, 2022 In-Person

City, State Dayton, Ohio

Contact Info/Web link <https://conference.oeffa.org/>

Name Second Lakota Food Summit

Dates February 15-17, 2022

City, State Rapid City, South Dakota

Contact Info/Web link <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/second-lakota-food-summit-tickets-227814026887>

Name Commodity Classic

Dates March 10-12, 2022

City, State New Orleans, Louisiana

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

Name AgrAbility National Training Workshop

Dates March 14-17, 2022

City, State Madison, Wisconsin

Contact Info/Web link <http://www.agrability.org/agrability-national-training-workshop/>