

AgrAbility e·Note

April 2022

A monthly update for AgrAbility projects and friends of AgrAbility

National AgrAbility Project News

The NTW was a great success! It was wonderful to be in person again. Just under 200 people attended the NTW in Madison, WI. There were many great sessions, discussions, meals, and much networking that took place. Over \$11,000 was raised through the silent and live auctions and the basket raffles. Thank you to all those who donated and made bids on items. Thank you to all those who helped plan and execute the 2022 NTW. The NAP is looking forward to planning the 2023 NTW. Anyone interested in being on the planning committee for 2023, please contact Tess at tmckeel@goodwillfingerlakes.org or by phone at 585-447-9015.



Thank you also to everyone else who attended and participated in the NTW, including the six couples/individuals who volunteered on the spot to be videoed for future "What AgrAbility Means to Me" clips on the NAP website. [More](#)

NAP partner AgriSafe attended the 2022 NTW training in Madison, WI, where staff members were asked to demonstrate how to properly fit PPE gear - specifically, proper use of masks. Here Charlotte Halverson demonstrates two different types for audience members.



Two AgriSafe staff members were also able to train attendees with QPR training, which teaches laypeople and professionals to recognize and respond to mental health crises using the approach of Question, Persuade, and Refer. Linda Emanuel and Carey Portell discussed the seriousness of suicide prevention in farmers and farm families and how to respond to those in mental health crisis.

Registration is open for the regional workshop in Columbus, OH, which will take place at the Hilton Garden Inn Columbus Easton on June 28th - 30th . It will focus on urban agriculture, working with vocational rehabilitation, prescription medication safety, assistive technology in agriculture, farming with a developmental disability, business planning, and work/life balance. [More](#)



AgrAbility/North Central FRSSAN webinar: "Veterans, Agriculture, and Stress," Thursday, May 19 at 2:00 p.m. EDT. Details coming via email soon.

NAP is making several changes in the annual demographic data collection instrument. Chuck Baldwin plans to soon contact the SRAP staff normally responsible for providing demographic data.



Kimber Nicoletti-Martínez gave a presentation and staffed a display at the 2022 Midwest Stream Forum for Agricultural Worker Health on March 28-30 in Austin, TX. She was joined by Esmeralda Mandujano of California AgrAbility and Elizabeth Gandara-Castillo of Texas AgrAbility.

Thank you to Texas AgrAbility OT interns Maggie Mencer and Faye McGuire for assisting NAP in staffing a display at the 2022 AOTA Convention on March 31 - April 3 in San Antonio.

Toolbox Spotlight

Designed to sow medium-size seeds (e.g., corn, beans, peas, sunflower) rapidly from a standing position, the [Spring-Loaded Stand-Up Jab Planter](#) works by simply jabbing it into the soil. Two models are available: a seeder only and a seeder/feeder. While both drop a selected number of seeds (1 or 2) at a selected depth (from 1.5 to 3 inches), the seeder/feeder model also deposits granular fertilizer (from 1/10 to 3 teaspoonfuls) into the soil 3 inches to the side. The device is best used for planting many long rows of the same crop at one time (not for small gardens).



State and Regional AgrAbility Project News

Alaska

Alaska AgrAbility's partner agency ATLA is excited to invite anyone interested to its first Assistive Technology Virtual Expo taking place on April 20th and 21st from 9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. AKT (1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. ET) each day. [More](#)



As was featured at the National Training Workshop (NTW) this year, attended by DeShana York and Ron & Marji Illingworth from AK, a farmer profile sheet was developed to showcase the North Pole Peonies operation and engagement with the Alaska project. [More](#)

The AKAgrAbility team recently attended the Matanuska Master Gardener Conference with over 120 participants. Assistive technology demonstrations and outreach around accessible gardening techniques were presented.

California

California AgrAbility served as a sponsor of the 34th Annual California Small Farms Conference. The conference was a hybrid event that featured over 50 different online workshops and forums for the California

small farm and local food community.... [More](#)

California AgrAbility staff attended the National AgrAbility all staff meeting on March 2nd. [More](#)



In mid-March, California AgrAbility team members attended the week-long AgrAbility National Training Workshop in Madison, Wisconsin. Team member Esme Mandujano participated in panel presentations on the topics of cultural humility and migrant farmworker assistive technology. [More](#)

Colorado

March was a busy month for the Colorado AgrAbility project. Staff spent the first part of the month traveling to the far west of Colorado, putting on winter workshops and visiting with farmers and ranchers. [More](#)

Georgia

National Ag Day was March 22nd. In celebration, Irwin County hosted an Ag Awareness Day in Ocilla, GA, for 5th graders. AgrAbility staff hosted a farm safety demonstration in which over 100 students participated.



Georgia AgrAbility attended the AgrAbility National Training Workshop and had a great time connecting with everyone and learning from the great sessions. Staff were excited to have their partners from the Shepherd Center and the Southern Region Farm and Ranch Stress Assistance Network join them for the NTW. Staff presented at two sessions: "Design by What You Can Find" and "Vision Solutions for Farmers."

Indiana

Chuck Baldwin presented AgrAbility and staffed a booth at the Black Loam conference for socially disadvantaged farmers held in Gary, IN, March 12. The conference was attended by at least 53 people. [More](#)



Kansas

Kansas AgrAbility, Ohio AgrAbility, and Alaska AgrAbility recently wrote a self-determined 4-H project: "[Disability Advocacy and Awareness](#)," which has been published on the Ohio State University Extension 4-H website. [More](#)

Marty Cotterman with Life Essentials joined Kansas AgrAbility and SAVE Farm for a demonstration of the Life Essentials truck lift. [More](#)

Small growers have an interest in maximizing their efficiency as well as production. KS AgrAbility staff were invited to highlight ergonomic tools, protective clothing for varying weather conditions, and modifications to small machinery to support producers with a variety of abilities. [More](#)

Maine



The 2022 Boots-2-Bushels (B2B) class hosted its first in-person farm field day at Morning Dew Farm Seedling and Supply in Damariscotta, Maine. The 30 attendees learned all the tips and tricks that Farmer Brady could teach about starting and growing seedlings. [More](#)

Corey Young is a master's level OT student from the University of New England who has just finished up her level 2 fieldwork experience with Maine AgrAbility. [More](#)

The Maine AgrAbility group had a great time at the NTW and did themselves proud representing their state efforts. Three staff members and one farmer attended in-person, and three additional staffers joined remotely to present or participate in seven workshops and panel discussions throughout the week. [More](#)



The quarterly Maine AgrAbility Advisory Council meeting was held in March via zoom. [More](#)

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

- [Fishing after a Stroke](#)
- [Benefits of Yoga for Commercial Fishermen](#)
- [Who's Got Your Back? Part II](#)

Michigan

Michigan AgrAbility had a presence at the AgrAbility National Training Workshop in Madison, WI, this past month. A reception was held for the Michigan-affiliated folks to enjoy fellowship and get acquainted. [More](#)



Missouri



Missouri AgrAbility actively participated during the 2022 AgrAbility National Training workshops through poster and oral presentations; facilitating an exhibit and passing out resources; and participating in community of interest (COI) meetings. [More](#)

Missouri AgrAbility focused its social media outreach efforts on Brain Injury Awareness month for farmers, ranchers, and their families. Here is the link to their [Brain Injury Awareness Promotional Toolkit](#).

John Fuller, field specialist in human development, and Karen Funkenbusch, director, Missouri AgrAbility from MU Extension, facilitated a 45-minute interview with Life Radio 90.3, "the station with a heart," about Missouri AgrAbility services, programs, and activities provided to farmers and ranchers with disabilities, veteran farmers, and their families.

Brain Injury Awareness Month featured the "Brain Injury Fact of the Day" sponsored by Missouri AgrAbility during March 2022. [More](#)

Emily Doosing, Missouri Extension specialist in 4-H youth development, presented the "4-H Save Your Brain" poster during the 2022 AgrAbility NTW. [More](#)

Missouri AgrAbility was highlighted as a program partner for the BIA-MO Survivor and Family Seminars that were held online on March 26 and April 2. [More](#)

Nebraska

Four team members attended the NTW and came away with some valuable information and experiences, like making bovine friends on the dairy tour.



The Nebraska Advisory Council met in March for input and feedback on projects. It was great to see everyone in person and on Zoom! The Nebraska team will offer all future annual meetings with the virtual option to accommodate those who cannot attend in person.

New Mexico

Brochures promoting AgrAbility were distributed to the 55 participants at the SW Beef Symposium held in Tucumcari, NM.

Staff are delighted that the Covid-19 pandemic in New Mexico has been waning and that they have had increased referrals from farmers and increased interest from farmers for farm-site assessments.

North Carolina

NC AgrAbility Partnership participated in the National Training Workshop in Madison, WI, from March 14-17. The NTW counted on the participation of 19 North Carolinians, including NC farmer Davon Goodwin, the keynote speaker who shared his continuous healing process with the AgrAbility folks. [More](#)



Ohio

Ohio AgrAbility staff and farmers enjoyed attending the NTW in Madison, WI. Everyone welcomed the opportunities to meet new people, learn from their colleagues and other presenters, and network and share ideas to grow the Ohio Project. [More](#)

OAP staff presented an overview of Ohio AgrAbility services, assistive technology, and ways to modify equipment and facilities, to Dr. Dee Jepsen's ag safety class. [More](#)

Pennsylvania



The month of March was about the National Training Workshop in Madison, Wisconsin! The AgrAbility PA staff members were thrilled to be surrounded by colleagues and friends. [More](#)

In addition, Linda Fetzer presented in March at the Pennsylvania Farm Bureau Meeting in Region 4 (Johnstown). Her presentation included information on AgrAbility PA and mental health.

Tennessee

Over 1,200 adults and youth attended Discovery Park's National Ag Day on March 22. TN AgrAbility, TN Association of Rescue Squads, and Kentucky Department of Ag partnered together for a grain bin rescue scenario. [More](#)



Forty-six TN rescue personnel and agriculture producers in Bedford, Franklin, Lincoln, Marion, Marshall, and Moore counties spent a Saturday learning about grain bin safety and rescue awareness. [More](#)



TNAP staff Joetta T. White was honored to be recognized by KY Commissioner of Agriculture Ryan Quarles and Dale Dobson, KDA safety administrator, for her work in Tennessee on grain bin safety and rescue during the Discovery Park National Ag Day activities. [More](#)

TNAP was honored to be asked to be on the planning committee and to speak at the first Cultivate Women in Ag Conference. TNAP staff Joetta T. White's presentation, "Maintenance is More Than A Grease Gun," showed different "tools" to make farming/gardening tasks easier. [More](#)



Congratulations to Dr. Derrick Stowell on his national recognition and on making a difference in TN with his research to help veterans. [More](#)



Staff were "synergized" with their AgrAbility friends and with lots of networking and sharing new ideas and technology to help their farmers, in Madison, WI, at the annual AgrAbility National Training workshop! [More](#)

Tesha Humphrey, University of TN Extension coordinator for the Southern Region Farm and Ranch Stress Assistance Network team, presented and updated on S-FRSAN regional programs and support networks to help farmers manage mental health and farm stress. [More](#)

Jason Barber, a cattle farmer from Centerville, TN, who is legally blind, demonstrated his OrCam at the "Vision Solutions" NTW session with Ned Stoller. Jason said, "Thanks to this program, as well as the local vocational rehab, they are the reasons I have received the assistive technology to help me on my farming operation. [More](#)



Charley Jordan, TN farmer veteran consultant and flower farmer, represented TN well at the NTW and shared his veteran to farmer story on the veteran panel session. [More](#)

Texas

Texas AgrAbility staff conducted an assessment for a client interested in purchasing a new sub-compact John Deere tractor for his small farm. Recommendations were made for a lift, hand controls, and quick-connect attachments. [More](#)



Texas AgrAbility staff presented two presentations at the NTW: "Working with Capstone Students to Augment AgrAbility Services" and "How do We Educate Military Veterans as Successful Beginning Farmers?"

Ellie Gandara-Castillo, migrant and seasonal farmworker coordinator, attended the Midwest Stream Forum for Farmworker Health and helped with the AgrAbility booth. [More](#)



AgrAbility staff members Makenzie Thomas and Ellie Gandara Castillo attended the "We Are Women in Agriculture" virtual workshop where resources were shared with female agriculture producers.

Utah

AgrAbility of Utah staff had a wonderful time at the NTW in Madison and would like to thank everyone who worked so hard to make this a very special event.

On March 24, AgrAbility of Utah staff met online with staff from the Utah State Office of Rehabilitation to address any barriers and learn more about each other's organization.

AgrAbility staff were excited to attend the Utah/Arizona Range Livestock Workshop on March 29 and 30. Staff were able to meet with over 200 farmers and ranchers at this two-day conference held in Hurricane, UT, and Orderville, UT.

Virginia

AgrAbility Virginia is currently working with 33 farmer clients at various levels of engagement and need, including a vegetable farmer from Fluvanna County with arthritis who was able to get a garden cart that staff helped her identify.

Staff traveled to Madison, WI, for the NTW in March. See VCE Specialist Eddie Allen, Program Director Dr. Kim Niewolny, and Field Coordinator Tony Edwards displaying for Virginia's AgrAbility Project in the attached image.



Field Coordinator Jeremy Daubert presented on AgrAbility Virginia and farm safety to the C.L. Payne FFA Chapter in Fauquier County during National FFA Week on March 7th.

AgrAbility Virginia Project Director Dr. Kim Niewolny presented on AgrAbility during the Virginia Agriculture and Natural Resources Summit April 12-13 in Richmond.

Washington



Washington State AgrAbility Project (WSAP) attended the much-anticipated AgrAbility National Training Workshop in Madison, WI, March 14-17th. [More](#)

Northwest Access Fund, in cooperation with WSAP, launched a series of four webinars in March with topics of: [More](#)

WSAP implemented the ASANA record keeping system and is using it to track information and communication with clients.

Wisconsin

AgrAbility of WI was so happy to see everyone at the NTW, make new friends, and listen to some great sessions. Dr. Richard Straub was awarded the Breaking New Ground Achievement Award and the staff couldn't be more excited for him.



After a successful NTW in Madison, WI, a few weeks ago, AgrAbility of Wisconsin has been busy gearing up for the WPS Farm Show in Oshkosh,

the annual Summit in Cashton at Organic Valley, and a DVR counselor training at the Marshfield Ag Research Station. The WI staff are excited for all of these fun spring activities to get them out and see new and potential clients as well as for the hands-on experience with DVR.

As spring comes to Wisconsin, staff are excited for planting season and wish everyone a safe and healthy time.

International AgrAbility Network News

AgrAbility for Africa



In the past months, farmers across East Africa have seen major agricultural production loss due to drought, pests, and diseases. AgrAbility for Africa has been active out in the field to support and enhance awareness of ecosystem resilience to limit damage caused by climate change and variability.... [More](#)

On the subject of resilience, the AgrAbility for Africa and Uganda Junior Rangers team partnered for a webinar to share experiences and best practices on inclusion, building capacity for circular innovation, and tackling aquatic/marine pollution in commemoration of the International Solidarity Cleanup that was held on March 13, 2022. [More](#)

Staff Changes and Recognition

Missouri

Please help Missouri welcome Bessie Cox to the AgrAbility Project.

"Hi, my name is Bessie Cox, the new Program Manager for the Brain Injury Association of Missouri. I have 15 years in healthcare, mental health, and case management, along with a BA in Psychology. With psychology having been one of my first loves, and it still is, the mind continues to fascinate me. [More](#)



North Carolina

NC AgrAbility welcomes Dr. Crystal Cook Marshal, NC AgrAbility Partnership director and NC Agromedicine coordinator, and Kelsey Kilgore, NC AgrAbility field agent.

AgrAbility in the News

Click titles below for news stories featuring AgrAbility projects .

- [Bangor Daily News Reports on How Yoga Can Keep Maine Fishermen on the Water](#) (Main AgrAbility)
- ['I want to keep farming': AgrAbility program makes it possible for farmer after multiple surgeries](#) (Nebraska AgrAbility) (Nebraska AgrAbility)

- [Purdue Receives \\$2.8M for AgrAbility Projects](#) (National AgrAbility Project, Indiana AgrAbility Project)
 - [Fulfilling farm dreams](#) (Nebraska AgrAbility)
 - [AgrAbility Regional Workshop](#) (Ohio AgrAbility Project, National AgrAbility Project)
-

OtherNews

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

- [USDA Urges Communities, Farmers, Ranchers to be Prepared for Severe Weather](#)
 - [USDA updates Farm Loan Programs to increase equity](#)
 - [Crop Production Strategies During Supply Shortages & High Commodity Prices](#)
 - [The Do's and Don'ts of Ladder Safety](#)
 - [Fighting COVID-19 with milk?](#)
 - [New Farmers of America collection to be digitized through National FFA grant](#)
 - [Farmers Fuel America with Ethanol](#)
 - [Free Training Tools Available to Address Sexual Harassment of Farmworkers](#)
-

UpcomingEvents

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

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

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April 2022

National AgrAbility Project



Registration is open for the regional workshop in Columbus, OH, which will take place at the Hilton Garden Inn Columbus Easton on June 28th - 30th . It will focus on urban agriculture, working with vocational rehabilitation, prescription medication safety, assistive technology in agriculture, farming with a developmental disability, business planning, and work/life balance. On June 28th and 29th, there will be speakers from the National AgrAbility Project, Ohio AgrAbility, Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities, The Ohio State University Extension, H.A.R.D. Acre Farm, LifeLyfts, Farm Service Agency, and others. There will also be a day of agricultural tours on Thursday, June 30th. More information and the link to registration can be found [HERE](#).

For any questions or if interested in hosting a regional workshop, contact Tess McKeel at tmckeel@goodwillfingerlakes.org or by phone at 585-447-9015.

Submitted by Goodwill of the Finger Lakes

The National AgrAbility Project staff would like to thank everyone who attended and participated in the 2022 National Training Workshop (NTW)! Six couples and individuals volunteered on the spot to be videoed for future "What AgrAbility Means to Me" clips on the NAP website. Many enjoyed the food and fun nightly in the hospitality suite. And the Thursday tours went well and seemed to be greatly appreciated.



Submitted by Chuck Baldwin

April 2022

Alaska

Alaska AgrAbility's partner agency ATLA is excited to invite anyone interested to its first Assistive Technology Virtual Expo taking place on April 20th and 21st from 9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. AKT (1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. ET) each day. The expo will be free for all attendees, and all are welcome to join. Kyle Haney, Extension educator with Georgia AgrAbility, will be speaking on Thursday, April 21st at 11:00 a.m. AKT. His session, "AT for Farmers and Rural Community Members," will explore the wide range of assistive technology available with a specific focus on agricultural assistive technology.



As was featured at the National Training Workshop (NTW) this year, attended by DeShana York and Ron & Marji Illingworth from AK, a farmer profile sheet was developed to showcase the North Pole Peonies operation and engagement with the Alaska project. Ron participated at the NTW in the veteran panel discussion, and North Pole Peonies was profiled further during a presentation by DeShana York and Art Nash during one of the sessions titled, "Taking It Big - Starting AgrAbility in the Last Frontier."

Submitted by DeShana York

April 2022

California

California AgrAbility served as a sponsor of the 34th Annual California Small Farms Conference. The conference was a hybrid event that featured over 50 different online workshops and forums for the California small farm and local food community as well as several in-person gatherings around the state. Each region's in-person gathering was unique and gave conference-goers the opportunity to connect with fellow farmers, ranchers, and farm advocates.



California AgrAbility staff attended the National AgrAbility all staff meeting on March 2nd. The meeting opened with introductions from new AgrAbility staff members followed by an update from the AgrAbility USDA representative. Topics in the meeting included upcoming events and initiatives, upgraded NAP website update, and an update from Maine AgrAbility's Richard Brzozowski on fact sheet progress.



In mid-March, California AgrAbility team members attended the week-long AgrAbility National Training Workshop in Madison, Wisconsin. Team member Esme Mandujano participated in panel presentations on the topics of cultural humility and migrant farmworker assistive technology. Throughout the week, the California AgrAbility team had the opportunity to attend various workshops and learned about low-stress marketing for farmers, small business resources, developing a client management system, and how to use art to address mental health and stress issues in farmworker populations. Staff also attended the in-person AgrAbility Marketing and Media Community of Interest meeting. Team members ended the week with a full day of dairy tours.

Submitted by California AgrAbility

April 2022

Colorado

March was a busy month for the Colorado AgrAbility project. Staff spent the first part of the month traveling to the far west of Colorado, putting on winter workshops and visiting with farmers and ranchers. The following week, Jim Craig attended the NTW in Wisconsin. Upon his return, he and Candy hit the road again, delivering winter workshop education to farmers, ranchers, and professionals who serve them. The final week of the month we spent with occupational therapy interns who were experiencing, for many of them, the first taste of farm and ranch life. All in all, it was a very good month.

Submitted by Jim Craig

April 2022

Indiana

Chuck Baldwin presented AgrAbility and staffed a booth at the Black Loam conference for socially disadvantaged farmers held in Gary, IN, March 12. The conference was attended by at least 53 people. It was organized and led by John Jamerson, African American farmer from Lyles Station, IN, and director of the LIFE Project 2501 grant in which the National AgrAbility Project is a partner.



There were several speakers of note at the one-day conference including Jerry Raynor, Indiana state conservationist. Other organizations in addition to AgrAbility presenting at the event included Purdue Extension, FSA, NRCS, Indiana State Department of Agriculture, Hoosier Young Farmers Coalition, Farm Credit, Region Roots, and Faith Farms and Orchard.

Submitted by Chuck Baldwin

April 2022

Kansas

Kansas AgrAbility, Ohio AgrAbility, and Alaska AgrAbility recently wrote a self-determined 4-H project: "[Disability Advocacy and Awareness](#)," which has been published on the Ohio State University Extension 4-H website. Self-determined 4-H projects are for members who have a great project idea of their own or who want to work beyond a current project book. "Disability Advocacy and Awareness" has four topic areas: Person First, Safety, Service and Advocacy, and Wellness and Lifestyle. The Idea Starter also includes a Person First Survey, a Community Survey Checklist, and a Greenhouse Activity.

Marty Cotterman with Life Essentials joined Kansas AgrAbility and SAVE Farm for a demonstration of the Life Essentials truck lift. SAVE Farm board members enjoyed learning more about the Life Essentials products and how they can improve the accessibility at their farm that educates veterans and beginning farmers.

Small growers have an interest in maximizing their efficiency as well as production. KS AgrAbility staff were invited to highlight ergonomic tools, protective clothing for varying weather conditions, and modifications to small machinery to support producers with a variety of abilities. Cultivate Kansas City, a nonprofit that supports urban gardeners and small producers, hosted the event. Josh Volk, Slow Hand Farm, provided a presentation on farm tools and ergonomics in which he focused on CSA farming and accessible, efficient production designs. About 15 small-scale producers and 12 urban growers attended.

Submitted by Tawnie Larson

April 2022

Maine



The 2022 Boots-2-Bushels (B2B) class hosted its first in-person farm field day at Morning Dew Farm Seedling and Supply in Damariscotta, Maine. The 30 attendees learned all the tips and tricks that Farmer Brady could teach about starting and growing seedlings. Coast of Maine also provided organic seedling starter mix to all participants. A bring-your-own lunch included time to go over farming stretches, garden seating demos, and lots of networking and learning from each other.

Corey Young is a master's level OT student from the University of New England who has just finished up her level 2 fieldwork experience with Maine AgrAbility. She has worked closely with Maine AgrAbility's OTs to learn and develop her skills. Among her accomplishments are:

- Bi-monthly AT bulletins to share with B2B students,
- [Hand health presentation](#)
- [Fishing with a Spinal Cord Injury: Commercial Fisheries News April 2022](#)
- [Wearable Assistive Technology for Agricultural Workers](#)

The Maine AgrAbility group had a great time at the NTW and did themselves proud representing their state efforts. Three staff members and one farmer attended in-person, and three additional staffers joined remotely to present or participate in seven workshops and panel discussions throughout the week. Staff are super excited that their project director, Richard Brzozowski, was awarded Purdue's Breaking New Ground Achievement Award at the 2022 NTW, recognized for his major contributions to the lives of farm families that have been impacted by disability. Richard works tirelessly to make a difference for Maine farmers, fishermen, and forest workers.



The quarterly Maine AgrAbility Advisory Council meeting was held in March via zoom. Staff are excited to have the support of an incredibly diverse and supportive group of volunteers to help guide the program. To learn more about the advisory council, check out the [advisory council webpage](#).

Submitted by Lani Carlson

April 2022

Michigan

Michigan AgrAbility had a presence at the AgrAbility National Training Workshop in Madison, WI, this past month. A reception was held for the Michigan-affiliated folks to enjoy fellowship and get acquainted. It was especially rewarding for the young farmers in the group to mingle with fellow Michigan farmers. Tiffany, Renee, and Spencer were the farmer representatives from Michigan, and they attended with their escorts. Special thanks to Farm Credit Service of Michigan and National AgrAbility Project sponsorships.



AgrAbility Project

Submitted by Hailey TenHarmsel

April 2022

Missouri

Missouri AgrAbility actively participated during the 2022 AgrAbility National Training workshops through poster and oral presentations; facilitating an exhibit and passing out resources; and participating in community of interest (COI) meetings.

Posters included:

- "Cultivating Missouri AgrAbility's Social Media Strategy" by Tevin Uthlaut and Karen Funkenbusch, University of Missouri Extension
- "Save Your Brain: Preventing Brain Injury through 4-H and AgrAbility Collaboration" by Emily Doosing, University of Missouri Extension/BIA-MO, Karen Funkenbusch and Lupita Fabregas, University of Missouri Extension, and Maureen Cunningham, Brain Injury Association of Missouri. Poster descriptions can be found toward the bottom of the page at <http://www.agrability.org/agrability-national-training-workshop/schedule/>



Oral presentations included :

- "Building Resilience into your farm: Let nature do the heavy lifting!" by Susan Jaster, Missouri AgrAbility - Lincoln University Cooperative Extension
- "Indoor Assistive Technology Show and Tell" by Ned Stoller, Michigan AgrAbility, and Susan Jaster, Shon Bishop, and David Middleton, Missouri AgrAbility - Lincoln University Cooperative Extension. Session descriptions can be found toward the bottom of the page at <http://www.agrability.org/agrability-national-training-workshop/schedule/>
- "AgrAbility 'Accessing' the Amish/Plain Farmer" by Bill Field and Chuck Baldwin, National AgrAbility Project, Karen Funkenbusch, Missouri AgrAbility, and Dee Jepsen, Ohio AgrAbility



Submitted by Tevin Uthlaut and Karen Funkenbusch

Brain Injury Awareness Month featured the "Brain Injury Fact of the Day" sponsored by Missouri AgrAbility during March 2022. A unique Brain Injury Fact was posted each day on numerous agricultural, rural living, weather, brain injury, and healthcare websites and social media sites. Individuals were encouraged to learn more about the posted Brain Injury Fact of the Day on the [Brain Injury Association of Missouri \(BIA-MO\) website](http://www.bia-mo.org/). This campaign resulted in 2,263 new users to the BIA-MO website and a Facebook reach of 14,000 and 26,000 impressions.

Emily Doosing, Missouri Extension specialist in 4-H youth development, presented the "4-H Save Your Brain" poster during the 2022 AgrAbility NTW. The purpose of this Missouri AgrAbility educational activity is to help rural youth understand the causes, effects, and ways to interact with persons with brain injury. There is also a

focus on the prevention of brain injuries on the farm, in sports, around the house, and more. The leaders' guide curriculum and manual include experiential learning activities to engage 4-H youth toward outcomes of connections with others, personal standards, academic or vocational success, and overall happiness and wellbeing. Co-authors of the 4-H Save Your Brain program with Emily Doosing are Karen Funkenbusch and Lupita Fabregas with University of Missouri Extension and Maureen Cunningham with the Brain Injury Association of Missouri.

The Missouri AgrAbility exhibit table offered copies of the 4-H Save Your Brain Leaders Guide. There were also samples of the Brain Injury Resource Kits that included a Missouri "Living with Brain Injury" Greenbook, Brain Injury Association of America Caregivers Guide, BIA-MO Brain Injury Recovery Step by Step brochure, and Missouri AgrAbility Journal of Hope. Each resource highlights Missouri AgrAbility for farmers, ranchers, and veterans with disabilities.

Missouri AgrAbility was highlighted as a program partner for the BIA-MO Survivor and Family Seminars that were held online on March 26 and April 2. Nearly 100 individuals across Missouri learned about Missouri AgrAbility as a resource for farmers, ranchers, and veterans with disabilities.

Submitted by Maureen Cunningham

Staff Changes and Recognition

Please help Missouri welcome Bessie Cox to the AgrAbility Project.

"Hi, my name is Bessie Cox, the new Program Manager for the Brain Injury Association of Missouri. I have 15 years in healthcare, mental health, and case management, along with a BA in Psychology. With psychology having been one of my first loves, and it still is, the mind continues to fascinate me. I am passionate about life and being of service to others, whether it be through educating, empowering, and/or supporting others along their journey. Helping others in different ways to improve, strengthen, and rebuild areas in their life is vital to each of us individually, but also to the community as a whole. The more we know, the more we grow together! I am also a mom of seven amazing children whom I continue to learn so much from each day. Some personal hobbies/interests are: love for nature, outdoors activities, reading, art, music, cooking/baking, creating opportunities with new experiences that promote growth, curiosity, adventure, hope, joy, and unity, within myself, my family, and my community. Thank you for taking the time to learn more about me! I am super grateful for being part of this amazing team and community here at the Brain Injury Association of Missouri (BIA-MO)."



April 2022

North Carolina



NC AgrAbility Partnership participated in the National Training Workshop in Madison, WI, from March 14-17. The NTW counted on the participation of 19 North Carolinians, including NC farmer Davon Goodwin, the keynote speaker who shared his continuous healing process with the AgrAbility folks. Dr. Chantel Simpson, NC A&T professor, and Betty Rodriguez, NC AgrAbility manager,



presented during the cultural humility panel about the African American and Latino communities in agriculture. Betty Rodriguez also presented a session, "Growing the Collaborative Work to Better Serve the Needs of Farmers with Disabilities." Two students presented posters: "Experiences of Farmers with a



Spinal Cord Injury" by Lauren Rainone, MGH OT doctoral student, and "Expanding Networking and Outreach through Social Media" by Evan Hairston, NCA&T graduate



student. NC AgrAbility staff, partners, farmers, students, and collaborators had the opportunity to learn and network at this very re-energizing event. NC AgrAbility appreciates the attendance of eight NC farmers who accepted the invitation to participate at the 2022 NTW.



Submitted by Beatriz (Betty) Rodriguez

April 2022

Ohio

Ohio AgrAbility staff and farmers enjoyed attending the NTW in Madison, WI. Everyone welcomed the opportunities to meet new people, learn from their colleagues and other presenters, and network and share ideas to grow the Ohio Project. Project Director Dee Jepsen participated in a panel discussion for "AgrAbility 'Accessing' the Amish/Plain Farmer." Dee and Laura Akgerman, disability services coordinator, co-presented "Making Lemonade When Your Outreach Event Hands You Lemons" with Kendra Martin (PA), Lani Carlson and Dick Brzozowski (ME), and Tawny Larson (KS) AgrAbility Projects.

OAP staff presented an overview of Ohio AgrAbility services, assistive technology, and ways to modify equipment and facilities, to Dr. Dee Jepsen's ag safety class. The annual presentation is a great way to engage with students, inspire them to think of ways they can help Ohio AgrAbility serve farmers, and prompt them to consider focusing on an AgrAbility client for their capstone projects. The presentation includes scenarios to encourage them to think about how making adjustments to their equipment, body mechanics, and work habits can help them reduce the risk of aches, pains, and secondary injuries as they age.

Submitted by Laura Akgerman

April 2022

Pennsylvania

The month of March was about the National Training Workshop in Madison, Wisconsin! The AgrAbility PA staff members were thrilled to be surrounded by colleagues and friends. Thanks to the [National AgrAbility Project](#) and [AgrAbility of Wisconsin](#) for a phenomenal week of networking, learning, and connecting with colleagues from projects all across the country.

AgrAbility PA staff members kept busy at the NTW through volunteering, moderating, networking, and presenting. Presentations included:

- Pre-Conference Session: several topics by Abbie Spackman
- Poster Session: "Farmers' Stress and Career Commitment" by Dr. Suzanna Windon
- Conference Session: "Making Lemonade - Outreach Events" by Kendra Martin
- Conference Session: "Utility Vehicle Selection/Safety" by Abbie Spackman and Linda Fetzer
- "Managing Stress on the Farm" by Suzanna Windon



Also, a heartfelt thanks to all who donated and supported efforts at the NTW to send money to Ukraine. AgrAbility PA Project Director Dr. Suzanna Windon is a native Ukrainian. She shared a few words during the evening banquet event.

Submitted by Kendra Martin

April 2022

Tennessee

Over 1,200 adults and youth attended Discovery Park's National Ag Day on March 22. TN AgrAbility, TN Association of Rescue Squads, and Kentucky Department of Ag partnered together for a grain bin rescue scenario. KDA Safety Coordinator Dale Dobson brought Miss Kentucky to the event. She spoke to the audiences on grain bin safety and even allowed herself to be rescued. Click the link to learn more about [Ag Day @ Discovery Park in Tennessee](#).



Forty-six TN rescue personnel and agriculture producers in Bedford, Franklin, Lincoln, Marion, Marshall, and Moore counties spent a Saturday learning about grain bin safety and rescue awareness. TN AgrAbility Project was the facilitator, and members of the TN Association of Rescue Squads were the instructors. This training concluded the spring TN Grain Bin Safety/Rescue Awareness for 2022.



TNAP staff Joetta T. White was honored to be recognized by KY Commissioner of Agriculture Ryan Quarles and Dale Dobson, KDA safety administrator, for her work in Tennessee on grain bin safety and rescue during the Discovery Park National Ag Day activities. Since 2020, there have been 29 ag producers and 322 rescue personnel go through the TN Grain Bin Safety/Rescue Awareness training.

TNAP was honored to be asked to be on the planning committee and to speak at the first Cultivate Women in Ag Conference. TNAP staff Joetta T. White's presentation, "Maintenance is More Than A Grease Gun," showed different "tools" to make farming/gardening tasks easier. The conference had a great turn out and presented a wealth of knowledge from numerous speakers with a wide range of topics. Plans are in the works to make this an annual event. Visit the [Cultivate Women in Agriculture Facebook page](#) to learn about each speaker, their topic, and the committee members.



Congratulations to Dr. Derrick Stowell on his national recognition and on making a difference in TN with his research to help veterans. American Horticulture Society announced that Derrick Stowell, Ph.D., at the University of Tennessee (UT) in Knoxville/Education & Horticultural Therapy Program and a TN AgrAbility partner, was chosen to receive the AHS 2022 Horticultural Therapy Award for his remarkable work bringing groundbreaking therapy using horticulture to those with mental health diagnoses, intellectual disabilities, and dementia. Thank you Dr. Stowell on your work to bring assistance to those in need through the art and science of horticulture.



Staff were "synergized" with their AgrAbility friends and with lots of networking and sharing new ideas and technology to help their farmers, in Madison, WI, at the annual AgrAbility National Training workshop! Staff from TN AgrAbility's new nonprofit partner STAR Center attended, as well as TN AgrAbility staff and farmers. Thank you to the amazing hosts,

WI AgrAbility, and especially Jo Beth and Tess and NAP for another great conference!

Tesha Humphrey, University of TN Extension coordinator for the Southern Region Farm and Ranch Stress Assistance Network team, presented and updated on S-FRSAN regional programs and support networks to help farmers manage mental health and farm stress. Louisiana and Georgia, two of Tennessee's partner states, were represented and networked at NTW 2022. Mental health awareness sessions were well attended this year.

Jason Barber, a cattle farmer from Centerville, TN, who is legally blind, demonstrated his OrCam at the "Vision Solutions" NTW session with Ned Stoller. Jason said, "Thanks to this program, as well as the local vocational rehab, they are the reasons I have received the assistive technology to help me on my farming operation. During this conference, I was personally asked to share a little bit of what the assistive technology has done for me. This was a very extreme honor to be part of this program. I was able to speak to staff and farmers from across the nation. All in all, this was one amazing experience. We met a few people we already knew, but we met so many other new people and made some awesome connections. Thank you!"



The photo includes Melissa who has spina bifida and Jason who is legally blind from retinitis pigmentosa. "It pretty much sums up our relationship. Is he helping push me or am I helping to guide him? BOTH! He's my legs and I'm his eyes!" Photo credit goes to [Maria Shelton Curl!](#)

Charley Jordan, TN farmer veteran consultant and flower farmer, represented TN well at the NTW and shared his veteran to farmer story on the veteran panel session. Charley shared, "I had the fantastic opportunity to attend an in-person AgrAbility conference over the last few days in beautiful Madison, Wisconsin. AgrAbility over the past eight years has been an unwavering supporter of mine. I was afforded the opportunity to share my story of farm success and my horticulture therapist journey with three other heroes including Davon Goodwin from OTL Farms who was featured with me in the American Legion video. This by far is my favorite conference. Being together with other veterans with disabilities who are kicking ass in the agriculture world and serving their local communities by feeding them and reintroducing them to the ag world. Many of us have the same stories of leaving the service and having difficulties in finding the purpose, motivation, and direction to continue on in this life. We often share the same stories of wanting to end our lives, including myself, because we feel like there's nothing out there for us anymore after our service is complete. Many of us have gone through the same disappointing job interview processes where we are disregarded because our disabilities "just don't make a good fit" for their organization. Agriculture doesn't care if you're disabled; agriculture invites all makes and models of humans to join in the mission of providing quality agricultural products to this great nation and beyond. You can have your corporate world where you bust your back to make someone else rich while getting rewarded with a few days of vacation time a year. For now, I'll keep producing fresh cut flowers, mushrooms, and honey for my awesome Clarksville community and teaching my fantastic undergrad students at Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University about all thing's aviation. Thank you AgrAbility for believing in us!"



Submitted by Tennessee AgrAbility Project

April 2022

Texas

Texas AgrAbility staff conducted an assessment for a client interested in purchasing a new sub-compact John Deere tractor for his small farm. Recommendations were made for a lift, hand controls, and quick-connect attachments.



The client modified his tractor with homemade hand controls that could be removed for other users. The hand-controls were made with 1/2-inch threaded rod, fittings, and plastic pipe, and includes a weed-eater handle for the grip. The total price for the hand control modifications was around \$75.



Ellie Gandara-Castillo, migrant and seasonal farmworker coordinator, attended the Midwest Stream Forum for Farmworker Health and helped with the AgrAbility booth. Around 165 individuals were in attendance for the event and were given resources for accessing AgrAbility services for migrant and seasonal farmworkers.



Submitted by Makenzie Thomas

April 2022

Washington



Washington State AgrAbility Project (WSAP) attended the much-anticipated AgrAbility National Training Workshop in Madison, WI, March 14-17th. Farmer Deb Eidsness attended the conference and summarized her experience by stating, "As a farmer and a veteran, it was revealing and healing to speak and learn from other folks who have been involved in agriculture while at this conference."

Northwest Access Fund, in cooperation with WSAP, launched a series of four webinars in March with topics of:

- AgrAbility: What is it? What does it do and can it help me?
- Assistive Technology: What's available, How to choose it, How to fund it
- Medical Debt and Charity Care: Income-Eligible Programs for Emergency Medical Care Expenses
- Applying for Social Security Disability Benefits

Submitted by Kristen Hinton-Vanvalkenburg

April 2022

AgrAbility for Africa



In the past months, farmers across East Africa have seen major agricultural production loss due to drought, pests, and diseases. AgrAbility for Africa has been active out in the field to support and enhance awareness of ecosystem resilience to limit damage caused by climate change and variability - realities that make it hard for its clients when planning for key activities such as timely planting of crops - leading to frequent crop failures and posing significant threats to food security and livelihoods.

On the subject of resilience, the AgrAbility for Africa and Uganda Junior Rangers team partnered for a webinar to share experiences and best practices on inclusion, building capacity for circular innovation, and tackling aquatic/marine pollution in commemoration of the International Solidarity Cleanup that was held on March 13, 2022. This was an event made possible by One Earth One Ocean (OEOO), an international Germany-based non-government organization working around the world to protect and preserve aquatic/marine eco-systems while supporting inclusive employment and the livelihood of fishing communities.

Submitted by Mutumba Faisal

April 2022

Upcoming Events

Name ATV-UTV Safety for Women
Dates April 20, 2022 1:00 p.m. - 2:00 p.m. ET
City, State Virtual Training - Online
Contact Info/Web link https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_crJ9b0apRHytPB2-l0ni5Q

Name AT Virtual Expo
Dates April 20-21, 2022, 1:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m. ET
City, State Zoom Online
Contact Info/Web link <https://www.atlaak.org/home/at-virtual-expo>

Name 2022 World Pork Expo
Dates June 8-10, 2022
City, State Des Moines, Iowa
Contact Info/Web link <https://www.worldpork.org/>

Name North American Manure Expo
Dates July 13-14, 2022
City, State Chambersburg, Pennsylvania
Contact Info/Web link <https://www.manureexpo.ca/>

Name AgrileadHER™ Women's Agriculture Conference
Dates August 17-18, 2022
City, State Virtual Conference
Contact Info/Web link www.agrileadHER.com