

AgrAbility e•Note

December 2022

A monthly update for AgrAbility projects and friends of AgrAbility

National AgrAbility Project News

2023 NTW Updates:

- REGISTRATION IS NOW OPEN! Visit www.agrability.org/ntw and click the Register tab. Early-bird pricing ends February 17, and registration closes March 13.
- Farmer stipend applications were due December 15th. However, the NAP will continue to accept applications for a short time on a first-come, first-served basis. The application can be found on the [NTW website on the Stipends tab](#).
- A tentative schedule is also available at www.agrability.org/ntw. There is still time to submit an application to display a poster. The Call for Posters can be accessed [HERE](#).
- Please continue to reach out to businesses and organizations that might want to participate either as an exhibitor or a sponsor. The exhibitor/sponsor Google form can be accessed [HERE](#). If a paper version is needed to share, it can be found on the NTW website under the [Exhibitor or Sponsor tabs](#). Please feel free to share these links
- Don't forget to start thinking about auction items. Items can be shipped ahead of time to: [More](#).



Tess McKeel - tmckeel@goodwillfingerlakes.org -585.447.9015
or JoBeth Rath - jbrath@goodwillfingerlakes.org - 585.402.2059
(Photo courtesy of WA State Department of Agriculture)



National AgrAbility recently produced a new video featuring Laurie Hayn - who is scheduled to be the keynote speaker at the 2023 NTW - and another featuring Steve Swain. Both are available for viewing on the [NAP YouTube channel](#) and for download by AgrAbility staff at www.agrability.org/extranet/marketing.

November's monthly Zoom discussion, "Safety During Farm Visits," was recorded and is archived at www.agrability.org/resources/discussions.

A regional workshop was held in Reno at the Silver Legacy Resort November 29th - December 1st. There were 21

people in attendance from 8 different states/territories including three participants from Guam. [More](#)



The AgrAbility/North Central FRSAN webinar "Corn, Cattle, and a Flask of Whiskey: Understanding stress and substance use in agricultural and rural populations" is now archived at www.agrability.org/training-category/archived. Thank you to Chad Reznicek for his presentation.



Bill Field and Chuck Baldwin were involved in the national agricultural Extension conference, "Connecting with Amish and Other Plain Communities," in Shipshewana, IN, November 1-3. [More](#)

Ed Sheldon, Chuck Baldwin, and John Jamerson (LIFE Project 2501 grant director) presented AgrAbility and the LIFE Project at the National Black Farmers Association annual conference in McComb, Mississippi, November 4-5. More than 550 socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers attended the conference. [More](#)



The National AgrAbility Advisory Team met in Indianapolis and virtually on December 13 & 14. Composed of professionals from agriculture, rehabilitation-related organizations, and current or former AgrAbility clients, the NAP Advisory Team contributes to short- and long-range strategic planning and enhances networking capacity. A total of 25 advisors, consultants, and staff members participated.

Toolbox Spotlight

A [Topper Lift System for Pickups](#) allows users to independently store wheelchairs in the truck bed. The system operates by hand-held remote only when cab door is open. It operates in conjunction with a wheelchair hoist and power truck seat lift. The topper lift system first lifts/lowers the cargo bed topper; the wheelchair hoist lifts the chair into/out of the bed; and the power seat lift rotates out the door for transfer to or from the chair.



State and Regional AgrAbility Project News

Alaska

The Alaska AgrAbility project participated in the 2022 Alaska Farm Convention & Trade Show, which was held at the Egan Center. The event started on Friday, November 11, Veterans Day, with a presentation of the colors by the UAA Army Color Guard in recognition of those with military service. [More](#)



California (affiliate)

California AgrAbility staff presented Question, Persuade and Refer (QPR)



Gatekeeper suicide prevention training in Spanish at the 8th annual Latino Farmer Conference in San Diego, California. [More](#)

California AgrAbility's Esmeralda Mandujano presented at the AgrAbility regional workshop in Reno, Nevada. Esmeralda's presentation, "Applications of Cultural Humility in WRASAP and AgrAbility Service Delivery," highlighted two approaches to engage with community members as service representatives. [More](#)

Colorado

The past few years have reflected a new openness to discuss mental health issues on the farm. Those problems have always been there, hidden in the felt shame of stigma. Today, however, there is new light shed on the subject and ag folks are at the forefront of taking it head-on. [More](#)

Florida

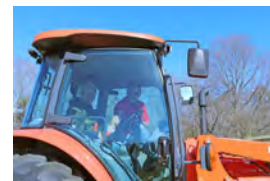
Florida AgrAbility hired a case coordinator, Lindsey Head, who will be the key staff for the program. Lindsey completed orientation in mid-November and attended the AgrAbility regional training November 29th-December 1st.

Florida AgrAbility began drafting protocols for establishing an advisory board and continued development of digital and tangible products for upcoming outreach activities.

An application was submitted and is currently pending review to the UF IRB by Florida AgrAbility to obtain approval for data collection related to outreach and evaluation activities. The Florida AgrAbility website (<http://agrability.ifas.ufl.edu>) and e-mail (fl-agrability@ufl.edu) are fully functional now.

Georgia

Georgia AgrAbility hosted a full day course for new and experienced farmers to learn how to safely operate a tractor. The workshop was held at the University of Georgia's Mountain Research and Education Center and focused on many topics that are unique to farmers operating tractors... [More](#)



Staff attended the 2022 Growing Together Farmer Veteran Stakeholders Conference.

Georgia AgrAbility staff gave a presentation titled "Working with Rural Populations in Agriculture" to faculty and staff at the University of Georgia College of Family and Consumer Sciences on November 30th. The presentation featured the work of AgrAbility and the Farm and Ranch Stress Assistance Network in the state of Georgia.

Georgia AgrAbility has teamed up with Georgia Agriculture Wellness Alliance, a coalition of farmers, nonprofits, colleges and universities, health organizations, state agencies, agricultural commissions/associations, and agribusiness specialists ... [More](#)



Indiana

AgrAbility Veteran Outreach Coordinator Joe Ricker hosted staff



members from the Indiana Grown program at his east-central Indiana farm, At Ease Orchard, on November 22. Indiana Grown is a statewide branding initiative to promote Indiana agricultural products that is administered by the Indiana State Department of Agriculture (ISDA). [More](#)

Paul Jones presented "Understanding Disabilities" to Purdue's AGR 201 Communicating Across Culture class, and Joe Ricker gave an overview of veterans, disabilities, and agriculture.

Paul Jones also gave a webinar overview of AgrAbility to Purdue Extension educators during the "virtual day" of the 2023 Purdue Extension Professional Development Conference.

Maine

[Registration for Boots-2-Bushels 2023](#) is open to all beginning farmers, with priority to veterans, their family members, and farmers with a disability. New this season is a recruiting effort to include farmer veterans from throughout New England to join the program at a reduced fee.



As part of Maine AgrAbility's outreach to Maine's fishermen, staff published another [post highlighting dynamic stretching for fishermen](#). Staff is developing a boat-friendly waterproof poster that captures the series of published stretches.

Michigan

The Michigan State University Alpha Gamma Rho TAU Chapter (MSU AGR) donated part of the proceeds from their hog roast to Michigan AgrAbility. The partnership with MSU AGR over the years has helped Michigan AgrAbility purchase equipment for farmers. [More](#)



Missouri

This month, Missouri's efforts included educating participants about ways in which to avoid secondary injuries, shared information with stakeholders, assisted farmers and their rural families with individualized consultative services, and facilitated project awareness about MO AgrAbility's programs, services, and activities. [More](#)

Brenda Schreck and Elizabeth Picking, both MU Extension regional specialists in livestock and who are regional AgrAbility outreach coordinators, focused their efforts on the early identification of farm and rural families who needed on-farm services. [More](#)



- A few key points on 4-H Save Your Brain (SYB):
- Staff recruited 8 new 4-H SYB ambassadors and three new volunteers.
 - Staff scheduled another "Train the Trainer" for January. [More](#)

Missouri AgrAbility news stories reached more than three million through state and national publications, web pages, blogs, newspapers, and social media sites. [More](#)

Missouri AgrAbility focused their social media efforts on program promotion, opportunities for farmers, and health, safety, and wellness tips. Make sure to like and follow Missouri AgrAbility, @MOAgrAbility, on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), and [Instagram](#).

Lincoln University Innovative Small Farmers' Outreach Program outreach workers Nalee Yang and Angela Brattin shared AgrAbility information at an event with Hmong farmers celebrating the Hmong New Year.



4-H Save Your Brain Program and Missouri AgrAbility were highlighted by Maureen Cunningham with the Brain Injury Association of Missouri (BIA-MO) at an exhibit during the Missouri State Teachers Association (MSTA) Convention November 17 and 18, 2022. [More](#)

Nebraska

Emily Jacobson represented Nebraska AgrAbility at the Stand Up for Veterans Conference in November. There were over 50 veterans in attendance. [More](#)



Rod Johnson attended the Gateway Farm and Ranch Expo in Kearney, Nebraska, on November 16 and 17. [More](#)



Emily also represented Nebraska AgrAbility at the Ag-Exceptional Women's Conference. Over 400 women attended. The conference provided opportunities for women to learn about current farming and ranching practices, mental health awareness and much more.

The Nebraska AgrAbility team is making plans to have an in-person meeting in December. The team will take this opportunity to reflect on 2022, evaluate resources, and plan for 2023.

New Mexico

New Mexico AgrAbility's OTs Janet DeWeese and Mary Thelander Hill have submitted for CEU approval to OT and PT state boards to train rehabilitation professionals across NM on the resources for agricultural workers.

NM AgrAbility's OT and hand specialist Patricia Siegle is working with a UNM graduate assistant to create tiny educational opportunities for injury prevention.

The NM AgrAbility farm site completed their first Mandy's Farm apprenticeship cycle and on December 2nd, with its final workday, celebrated a successful first growing season!

New Mexico AgrAbility's winter harvest newsletter will be coming soon.

North Carolina

NC AgrAbility participated as an exhibitor at the 2022 Sustainable Agriculture Conference in Durham, NC, on November 5-7. The conference was attended by 748 people who learned, gained resources, and networked. NC AgrAbility talked directly to some of them, and all were exposed to the needs of farmers with disabilities and the resources provided.



November 9, 2022, NC AgrAbility participated in the 7th Annual Veteran Standdown at the National Guard Armory in New Bern, NC.



The event was well attended by many veterans, and several resources were available to provide information and guide them in their topics of interest.

Ohio

Ohio AgrAbility staff are grateful for another productive and safe year working with Ohio farmers and their families, stakeholders, and Vocational Rehabilitation colleagues. OAP staff are especially grateful for each other - the commitment, expertise, compassion, energy, and creativity that the team displays every day are a blessing. OAP staff are also very grateful for colleagues and collaborators across all of AgrAbility.



Pennsylvania



November in Pennsylvania was filled with fall temperatures and outreach events and presentations that took the staff around the state and beyond - to Indiana!

Abbie Spackman and Linda Fetzer attended the Connecting with Amish and Other Plain Communities conference in Shipshewana, Indiana. [More](#)

The same dynamic duo of Abbie Spackman and Linda Fetzer attended the Pennsylvania Farm Bureau's 72nd Annual Meeting in Hershey, PA. During the event, staff demonstrated assistive technology to attendees during the health fair and provided information on AgrAbility services. [More](#)



Project Director Dr. Suzanna Windon presented informative sessions on several topics connected to AgrAbility throughout the month. [More](#)

Tennessee



Merry Christmas from TN AgrAbility!

Tennessee AgrAbility staff are grateful to work together with an amazing AgrAbility team and spend time with their Extension family at the 2022 Extension Conference in Chattanooga!

TNAP co-hosted the Southern Ag Exchange Network (SAGe), rebranded from Southern Farm and Ranch Stress Assistance Network (S-FRSAN), informational session at the 2022 Extension Conference. [More](#)

TNAP celebrated the ultimate Volunteers! Thanks to all the veterans and those currently serving for their service and all the sacrifices they make for the nation's freedoms! [More](#)

TNAP attended the 2022 Wilson County Women in Ag Summit. Staff set up a display and spoke a few minutes on the AgrAbility program. [More](#)

A Carroll County TN farmer traded in his buckets for a UTV automatic feeder. The row-crop/livestock farmer suffers from complications due to diabetes. [More](#)



Texas



USDA NRCS did a success story titled "USDA, Texas AgrAbility and Partners Helping Veterans Find their Mission and Purpose in Agriculture" for Veterans Day. The story highlights Texas AgrAbility & BattleGround to Breaking Ground's work in assisting veterans to get started

in agriculture. Check out the [full story and video here](#).

Cheryl Grenwelge and Erin Kimbrough provided an on-farm assessment training to 25 students at the UT Tyler School of Medicine. The OT and medical students are part of a rural health providers program to work in rural settings upon graduation. They were provided hands-on training in conducting farm assessments and making recommendations for assistive technology and task modifications.



The Intro to Agriculture Boot Camp will be hosted January 9-13 in College Station. Texas AgrAbility will provide training on vocational rehab, farm safety, and Texas AgrAbility services.

Texas AgrAbility hosted the first session in the Lunch & Learn Series for service providers. The session "Services for Farmers and Ranchers with Disabilities" was attended by 10 vocational rehabilitation counselors. The session was recorded and can be viewed [HERE](#).



Makenzie Thomas attended the Hardin County Veterans Resource Fair in collaboration with the local extension office. Attendees were provided with information on becoming an AgrAbility client and the BattleGround to Breaking Ground program.

Utah (affiliate)

AgrAbility of Utah staff attended the Beaver River Watershed Tour and Pesticide Training Workshop and presented to more than 50 farmers and ranchers on Nov. 1. This workshop was sponsored by Utah State University Extension.

On Nov. 11, staff set up a booth and visited with many of the 160 participants of the West Central States Wool Growers Convention in Park City, Utah. Wool growers from Utah, Wyoming, and Idaho attended this three-day convention.

AgrAbility of Utah was able to present to 23 members of the Cache Interagency Council on Nov. 28 in Logan, UT.

Virginia

Another fantastic month of networking is in the books for AgrAbility Virginia. Staff were busy with outreach and presentations that included: Virginia Cooperative Extension Women Increasing Skills and Education (WISE), [More](#)



Washington

It has been a busy month for the Washington AgrAbility co-coordinators, filled with lots of outreach and new clients. The co-coordinators attended multiple conferences around the state where they displayed various AT pieces and handed out information to farmers, farm

workers, and ag professionals about AgrAbility. The co-coordinators are hoping to grow their service area greatly with these interactions.

Emily Whittier exhibited at the Tilth Alliance Conference and the Pacific NW Vegetable Association Conference. Combined, the events were attended by 1000 individuals.

Deb Eidsness staffed an AgrAbility booth at the Focus on Farming Conference attended by 150 people.

Alyssa Wade exhibited for AgrAbility at the Washington Cattlemen's Conference attended by 400 individuals.

Debbie Fredricks and Alyssa Wade exhibited at the Farm Bureau Conference and conducted a QPR Training. The event was attended by 350 people.

Emily also hosted a Farm Stress presentation where she incorporated AgrAbility and passed out materials to the farmers in attendance.

The Washington AgrAbility team has three new clients this month and many new potential clients from conference interactions.

International AgrAbility Network News

AgrAbility for Africa

AgrAbility for Africa staff are currently working on an Africa disability funding policy assessment survey paper to better understand and communicate disability services needs and access. [More](#)



It is common knowledge that persons with disabilities (PWD) living in Africa face many barriers, but gaps in service are exacerbated for those living on Islands, as social inclusion challenges are often multiplied. Many islands have little or no infrastructure, and transportation is expensive and very often unreliable. [More](#)

StaffChanges and Recognition

Florida

Florida AgrAbility welcomes Lindsey Head as case coordinator.

Texas

Texas AgrAbility wishes Dr. Faye McGuire, OTD, the best of luck in her new venture. Dr. McGuire started with Texas AgrAbility as an intern through her doctoral capstone project. She has been a great asset to the Texas AgrAbility team and BattleGround to Breaking Ground program. We wish her all the best in her future endeavors.

AgrAbilityin the News

Click titles below for news stories featuring AgrAbility projects .

- [USDA, Texas AgrAbility and Partners Helping Veterans Find Their Mission and Purpose in Agriculture](#) (Texas AgrAbility)
- [Veteran Services at UTIA](#) (Tennessee AgrAbility Project)
- [Resilience in Cattle Country](#) (Washington State AgrAbility Project)
- [AgrAbility keeps farmers in the game despite disabilities](#) (AgrAbility of Wisconsin)
- [Grant to assist SDA and veteran farmers](#) (AgrAbility of Wisconsin)
- [Innovative technology keeps disabled farmers on the job](#) (AgrAbility of Wisconsin)
- [You're Invited To FARM ON!](#) (AgrAbility of Wisconsin)
- ['AgrAbility' to SC farmers](#) (AgrAbility in South Carolina)

OtherNews

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

- [USDA Advances Food Sovereignty Efforts in LFPA agreement with Chickahominy Indian Tribe Eastern Division](#)
- [At the White House Tribal Nations Summit, USDA Announces Continued Commitment to Indian Country](#)
- [Talking Total Farmer Health Podcast - "Concerns for Older Adults Working in Agriculture"](#)
- [USDA Announces Programs Supporting Hispanic Representation in U.S. Agriculture](#)
- [2022 Census of Agriculture is Here!](#)
- [New Video Sticker Platform to Improve Workplace Safety, Created by SaferMe](#)
- [Scaling Up Your Vegetable Farm for Wholesale Markets](#)
- [Organic Trade Association wins record funding to promote US organic globally](#)
- [Labor Challenges Increase Farm Economy Pressures](#)
- [National Poll Reveals Promising Trends in Rural Opioid Misuse; More Work Needed](#)

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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December 2022

National AgrAbility Project

2023 NTW Updates:

- Don't forget to start thinking about auction items. Items can be shipped ahead of time to: Kimberly Lengerich at 8615 N. Lehman Rd. Spokane, WA 99217. Please indicate somewhere on the packaging that it is for the AgrAbility NTW auction and let Kim know that an item is being shipped to her. Her email is kjdevries@wsu.edu, or you can call her at 360-333-1067.



Tess McKeel - tmckeel@goodwillfingerlakes.org - 585.447.9015
or JoBeth Rath - jbrath@goodwillfingerlakes.org - 585.402.2059

(Photo courtesy of WA State Department of Agriculture)



A regional workshop was held in Reno at the Silver Legacy Resort November 29th - December 1st. There were 21 people in attendance from 8 different states/territories including three participants from Guam. The presentations on WSA, AT, WRSAP, and Mental Health and Wellness were well received. Great conversations were had, and information was shared during breaks, lunch, and small group discussions. The tour on December 1st visited Lattin Farms, Frey Farm and Distillery, and Wolf Pack Meats. Copies of the sessions will be archived on the NAP website soon.

For any questions or are if interested in hosting a Regional Workshop, contact Tess McKeel at tmckeel@goodwillfingerlakes.org or 585-447-9015.

Bill Field and Chuck Baldwin were involved in the national Agricultural Extension conference, "Connecting with Amish and Other Plain Communities", in Shipshewana, IN, November 1-3. In addition to staffing an AgrAbility booth, Bill and Chuck hosted a discussion session Tuesday evening on AgrAbility's services and resources for Amish and other Plain groups. Indiana AgrAbility consultant Susan Pletcher shared her personal experiences dealing with a husband with spinal cord injury and leading the Spinal Cord Injured Persons - In Touch (SCIP-IT) group among the Amish and Mennonites in Northern Indiana. Linda Fetzer and Abbie Spackman from AgrAbility for Pennsylvanians were also there and added to the discussions. Bill also presented AgrAbility during a breakout session on Thursday morning.



The conference was attended by 105 people and the speakers were all excellent. One of the most helpful take-homes for Chuck was the explanation that in Amish society, while the male is generally the person "out front" in conversations and sharing decisions - in reality, when questions come up, the decision is often made in "back-stage" conversations with the family, wife, or other members of the Amish community before the man shares that decision. Therefore, when working with Amish and needing to ask for a decision on a question, it is often wise to plan to come back for the answer at a different time/date to give them the chance for

these back-stage conversations. Without the time to consult with others, most often the immediate response will be "No."



Ed Sheldon, Chuck Baldwin, and John Jamerson (LIFE Project 2501 grant director) presented AgrAbility and the LIFE Project at the National Black Farmers Association annual conference in McComb, Mississippi, November 4-5. More than 550 socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers attended the conference. In addition to speaking, many rewarding conversations were held with attendees at the AgrAbility booth, including a conversation

with the gentleman from Dinwiddie, VA, who won the "Oldest Farmer" award from the NBFA - 96 years old - and still going strong! Each year, old ties for AgrAbility with the NBFA are made stronger, and new relationships are created. This is a great opportunity to understand better the trials and victories that many African American and Native American farmers experience every day, and to encourage them in ways that improve their quality of life.



Submitted by Chuck Baldwin

December 2022

Alaska



The Alaska AgrAbility project participated in the 2022 Alaska Farm Convention & Trade Show, which was held at the Egan Center. The event started on Friday, November 11, Veterans Day, with a presentation of the colors by the UAA Army Color Guard in recognition of those with military service.

More than 25 vendors attended the trade show, with the CES-Anchorage Outreach Center, Anchorage 4-H, AKAgrAbility, and the Western Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education program represented. In addition, there were more than 23 faculty and staff in attendance from the Institute of Agriculture, Natural Resources & Extension (IANRE); 11 of them also presenting on a variety of topics.

Filipe Leite, "The Long Rider", presented the keynote speech at Friday's banquet. He talked about how he made the journey from Calgary, Canada all the way to his family's home in Brazil via horseback. He discussed the trials he faced as well as the beauty of humanity. People who had nothing gave him the shirt off their back literally or food they really couldn't afford to give away but did anyway. It was his life's goal to complete this trip and he ended up being one of the youngest to ever make the journey. He made a point to say that if you write something down, it is more likely you will follow through and make it happen.

The Institute of Agriculture, Natural Resources and Extension (IANRE) participated in many fun and interactive ways. Faculty presented talks ranging from the health of plants to the soil and the slugs that eat them. Floriculture and rhodiola were topics that got lots of foot traffic. The AKAgrAbility team staffed a vendor booth at the trade show. DeShana York and Art Nash did a presentation on AgrAbility and showcased some clients on the trade show stage educating and informing the ag community of the resources available to them.

Another highlight from the event was that Roger Tormoehlen, Professor of Agricultural & Biological Engineering at Purdue University, was in attendance as a vendor at the trade show. Roger has been affiliated with the Indiana AgrAbility project over the years and it was great to chat with him about his work. Thanks to Roger for attending this statewide event and sharing information on production [agriculture safety training for youth](#).



Submitted by DeShana York

December 2022

California



California AgrAbility staff presented Question, Persuade and Refer (QPR) Gatekeeper suicide prevention training in Spanish at the 8th annual Latino Farmer Conference in San Diego, California. This event continues to gain traction with Latino farmers and this year's event brought together around 200 Latino farmers, agricultural experts, and service providers. Colleagues from Farm Aid and WRASAP staffed an information booth with resources to support farmers and address farm stress in both Spanish and English.

California AgrAbility's Esmeralda Mandujano presented at the AgrAbility Regional Workshop in Reno, Nevada. Esmeralda's presentation, "Applications of Cultural Humility in WRASAP and AgrAbility Service Delivery", highlighted two approaches to engage with community members as service representatives: one being cultural competence, and the other cultural humility, with the latter being an expansion of the former. The presentation explored the difference between the two approaches and how they could be used to develop rapport between the service provider, farmer and farmworker.

Submitted by Angelina Padilla

December 2022

Colorado

The past few years have reflected a new openness to discuss mental health issues on the farm. Those problems have always been there, hidden in the felt shame of stigma. Today, however, there is new light shed on the subject and Ag folks are at the forefront of taking it head-on. A few short years ago, a group of providers consisting of Rocky Mountain Farmer Union (RMFU), Colorado AgrAbility, and numerous other behavioral health organizations, started to come together to discuss the issues and seek solutions. RMFU has a dedicated specialist whose function is to bring folks together with ideas.

So, again this year, RMFU has opened up its annual meeting to vendors so that an opportunity to meet face-to-face might help spread the word and the good work other agencies are doing. This information session was attended by professionals from mental health, farm credit, USDA/NIFA, and many others. The Colorado AgrAbility Project attended this information session and manned their table with a rural rehabilitation specialist and their behavioral health specialist. Staff were able to share AgrAbility's story with many in attendance throughout that day.

Submitted by Jim Craig

December 2022

Georgia

Tractor Safety Course - Georgia AgrAbility hosted a full day course for new and experienced farmers to learn how to safely operate a tractor. The workshop was held at the University of Georgia's Mountain Research and Education Center and focused on many topics that are unique to farmers operating tractors in that region of Georgia.



Participants learned in a classroom setting in the morning and were then able to apply their new safety knowledge when operating a New Holland or Kubota tractor in the afternoon.

Georgia AgrAbility has teamed up with Georgia Agriculture Wellness Alliance, a coalition of farmers, nonprofits, colleges and universities, health organizations, state agencies, agricultural commissions/associations, and agribusiness specialists who work together toward a common goal of aligning efforts to improve the well-being of farmers and farming communities in Georgia. Both AgrAbility and the Wellness Alliance are committed to supporting the health and safety of the farming community.



Submitted by AgrAbility in Georgia

December 2022

Indiana



AgrAbility Veteran Outreach Coordinator Joe Ricker hosted staff members from the Indiana Grown program at his east-central Indiana farm, At Ease Orchard, on November 22. Indiana Grown is a statewide branding initiative to promote Indiana agricultural products that is administered by the Indiana State Department of Agriculture (ISDA). Caroline Patrick, Indiana Grown program director, and Brandon Caldwell, marketing and

communications manager, were treated to a tour of Joe's orchard and beekeeping operation. Both were able to don beekeeping personal protective equipment and observe the hives. Although it was a cool, crisp day, bright sunlight had the bees active and flying. Ed Candelario, a US Marine veteran and Indiana AgVet currently interning for At Ease Orchard, assisted with the tour and demonstrations.



The group discussed how to better cross-promote the Indiana Grown and Homegrown by Heroes programs. Homegrown by Heroes is a national branding effort for farm products produced by veterans, and is sponsored by the Farmer Veteran Coalition. In addition, the ISDA staff learned about various AgrAbility programs, including Indiana AgVets, and were provided promotional resources to share with their counterparts.

Submitted by Ed Sheldon

December 2022

Michigan

The Michigan State University Alpha Gamma Rho TAU Chapter (MSU AGR) donated part of the proceeds from their hog roast to Michigan AgrAbility. The partnership with MSU AGR over the years has helped Michigan AgrAbility purchase equipment for farmers. Most recently, donations have helped purchase a Springz-back for a hay farmer to relieve back pressure during jobs that require bending, a scale that talks, and a scanner that enlarges small print for a farmstand operation.



Submitted by Hailey TenHarmsel

December 2022

Missouri

Missouri AgrAbility continued to increase the likelihood that individuals with disabilities, including veterans, and their families engaged in production agriculture (AgrAbility customers) become more successful. For example, this month, Missouri's efforts included educating participants about ways in which to avoid secondary injuries, shared information with stakeholders, assisted farmers and their rural families with individualized consultative services, and facilitated project awareness about MO AgrAbility's programs, services, and activities.

Brenda Schreck and Elizabeth Picking, both MU Extension regional specialists in livestock and who are regional AgrAbility outreach coordinators, focused their efforts on the early identification of farm and rural families who needed on-farm services. Both provided individualized consultative services with assistance from Vocational Rehabilitation and Rehab Services for the Blind case managers David Middleton, Susan Jaster, and Karen Funkenbusch - all from Missouri AgrAbility.

A few key points on 4-H Save Your Brain (SYB):

- Staff recruited 8 new 4-H SYB ambassadors and three new volunteers.
- Staff scheduled another "Train the Trainer" for January.
- Staff worked this past month with volunteers and 4-H SYB ambassadors to host a BMX rider and Kevin Hines to speak to students from Summersville and Winona School Districts regarding safety, making good choices, the importance of mental health, and inclusivity of individuals with disabilities.
- Staff concluded four SPIN Clubs since the start of the new 4-H program year that began October 1st. These SPIN Clubs have reached over 300 students.



Missouri AgrAbility news stories reached more than three million through state and national publications, web pages, blogs, newspapers, and social media sites. This is a team effort by specialists involved with the Missouri AgrAbility Project, MU Extension communications, College of Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources communications, and numerous media throughout the state and the United States. Unfortunately, due to holiday vacations, numbers are not available for the Veteran's Day promotion of accessible beekeeping and Heroes to Hives participants.

Submitted by Emily Doosing, Linda Geist, Karen Funkenbusch, and Tevin Uthlaut



4-H Save Your Brain Program and Missouri AgrAbility were highlighted by Maureen Cunningham with the Brain Injury Association of Missouri (BIA-MO) at an exhibit during the Missouri State Teachers Association (MSTA) Convention November 17 and 18, 2022. Urban and rural educators throughout Missouri learned about 4-H Save Your Brain curriculum, and Missouri AgrAbility as a resource for students and their families who are impacted by disability, including brain injury.

December 2022

Nebraska

Emily Jacobson represented Nebraska AgrAbility at the Stand Up for Veteran's Conference in November. There were over 50 veterans in attendance. Veterans had an opportunity to learn about services and benefits, make dog tags, visit with job recruiters, receive haircuts, and so much more.



Rod Johnson attended the Gateway Farm and Ranch Expo in Kearney, Nebraska, on November 16 and 17. Rod shared that several past and present clients stopped by the Nebraska AgrAbility booth to visit. This event gave Nebraska AgrAbility visibility and an opportunity to spread the word about services to Nebraska farmers and ranchers.

Submitted by Soni Cochran

December 2022

New Mexico

StoryContent

Submitted by

December 2022

Pennsylvania

November in Pennsylvania was filled with fall temperatures and outreach events and presentations that took the staff around the state and beyond - to Indiana!



Abbie Spackman and Linda Fetzer attended the Connecting with Amish and Other Plain Communities conference in Shipshewana, Indiana. The conference was a great way to network with professionals from across the country, including colleagues with the National AgrAbility Project (NAP) as well as from the state of Pennsylvania. It was an excellent conference and the AgrAbility PA staff is excited to work on some new outreach activities and collaborations.

The same dynamic duo of Abbie Spackman and Linda Fetzer attended the Pennsylvania Farm Bureau's 72nd Annual Meeting in Hershey, PA. During the event, staff demonstrated assistive technology to attendees during the health fair and provided information on AgrAbility services. While AgrAbility staff demonstrated heated gloves, several farmers stopped by and mentioned that they already use these types of gloves and have found them to be incredibly helpful in keeping their hand warm following traumatic hand injuries. AgrAbility also presented a session on "Tool and Equipment Selection for Safety and Accessibility" during the conference.



Project Director Dr. Suzanna Windon presented informative sessions on several topics connected to AgrAbility throughout the month:

- November 4th, 2022 - "Managing Stress on the Farm" webinar was presented at the Professional Development session, AIAEE (Association of International Agricultural and Extension Education)
- November 14, 2022 - Managing Stress on the Farm - a webinar was delivered for PA ag and natural resources stakeholders
- November 30 - Farmers' Quality of Life and their Leadership Competencies - Oral research presentation presented at the 2022 National Association of Extension Program and Staff Development annual conference.

Submitted by Kendra Martin

December 2022

Tennessee

Merry Christmas from TN AgrAbility!



Tennessee AgrAbility staff are grateful to work together with an amazing AgrAbility team and spend time with their Extension family at the 2022 Extension Conference in Chattanooga!

TNAP co-hosted the Southern Ag Exchange Network (SAGe), rebranded from Southern Farm and Ranch Stress Assistance Network (S-FRSAN), informational session at the 2022 Extension Conference. Attendees learned about farm stress and root causes of stress for farmers and connecting to the resources needed to manage operations. Staff understand that farming and ranching are some of the toughest ways to earn a living, and SAGe is working to connect resources.

The TN AgrAbility team entered a poster at the 2022 Extension Conference poster contest featuring the TN Grain Bin Safety/Rescue Awareness training. The poster received 2nd place in the ANR category.



TNAP celebrated the ultimate Volunteers! Thanks to all the veterans and those currently serving for their service and all the sacrifices they make for the nation's freedoms! TN works to build partnerships with the Farmer Veteran Coalition of TN to help veterans with disabilities who transition into farming. Watch a video [HERE](#).



TNAP attended the 2022 Wilson County Women in Ag Summit. Staff set up a display and spoke a few minutes on the AgrAbility program. Attendees enjoyed networking with each other, education sessions (animal science/horticulture/farm management), farm tours, and lunch with Dr. Ashley Stokes, Dean of UT Extension, as speaker.

A Carroll County TN farmer traded in his buckets for a UTV automatic feeder. The row-crop/livestock farmer suffers from complications due to diabetes. He recently had to have a foot amputated due to infection, but he continues to do what he loves: farming. Carroll County Extension Director Kenny Herndon contacted TN AgrAbility about this farmer. After a farm visit and finding the right UTV automatic feeder, he is able to feed his livestock herd from the seat of his UTV. He is one happy farmer.

Submitted by Tennessee AgrAbility Project

December 2022

Virginia

Another fantastic month of networking is in the books for AgrAbility Virginia. Staff were busy with outreach and presentations that included: Virginia Cooperative Extension Women Increasing Skills and Education (WISE), VSU Small Farms Conference, Lynchburg Area Nurse Practitioners Conference, Virginia Tech undergraduate agricultural sciences course, Virginia Farm Bureau Annual Meeting, and the Virginia Rural Health Voice Conference. Furthermore, staff were able to revisit a long-time client for updated footage and testimonial. The Virginia AgrAbility team is actively working with 12 farmers, and received six new inquiries this month!



Submitted by AgrAbility Virginia

December 2022

AgrAbility for Africa

AgrAbility for Africa staff are currently working on an Africa disability funding policy assessment survey paper to better understand and communicate disability services needs and access. This research is meant to support the organization's on-going efforts to map disability resources and identify and communicate gaps to better enhance advocacy efforts for disability services. The desired result is access improvement for children, mothers, and families who need these services across Africa.

Findings of the policy assessment will be presented at AgrAbility National Training Workshop in Spokane, Washington in March 2023. Support and guidance on the Africa disability funding policy assessment exercise is welcome.

It is common knowledge that persons with disabilities (PWD) living in Africa face many barriers, but gaps in service are exacerbated for those living on Islands, as social inclusion challenges are often multiplied. Many islands have little or no infrastructure, and transportation is expensive and very often unreliable. People with disabilities often have to be transported to the mainland to access health care, rehabilitation services, or other specialized support.



AgrAbility for Africa is fighting to change that; hence, the organization staff will often run offshore support activities to enhance disability services outreach to farmers in their island homes. Currently, offshore missions have been intensified because of the demand.



Submitted by Mutumba Faisal

December 2022

Upcoming Events

- | | |
|------------------------------|---|
| Name | New Battleground to Breaking Ground Phase 1 Course |
| Dates | Rolling admission |
| City, State | Online |
| Contact Info/Web link | https://agrilifelearn.tamu.edu/s/product/new-phase-1-battleground-to-breaking-ground/01t4x000002ciNKAAY |
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- | | |
|------------------------------|---|
| Name | Battleground to Breaking Ground - Phase 1: Introduction to Agriculture Boot Camp @ G. Rollie White Visitor's Center |
| Dates | January 9-13, 2023 |
| City, State | College State, Texas |
| Contact Info/Web link | https://txagrability.tamu.edu/calendar/ |
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|------------------------------|---|
| Name | Funding for agriculture assistive technology |
| Dates | January 18, 2022 |
| City, State | Virtual Online |
| Contact Info/Web link | https://txagrability.tamu.edu/calendar/ |
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|------------------------------|---|
| Name | North American Raspberry & Blackberry Association Conference |
| Dates | January 22-24, 2023 |
| | Tampa, Florida |
| Contact Info/Web link | https://www.raspberrylblackberry.com/2023-narba-conference/ |
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|------------------------------|---|
| Name | Cattle Industry Convention & NCBA Trade Show |
| Dates | February 1-3, 2023 |
| City, State | New Orleans, Louisiana |
| Contact Info/Web link | https://convention.ncba.org/ |
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|--------------------|---|
| Name | 2023 Commodity Classic |
| Dates | March 9-11, 2023 |
| City, State | Orlando, Florida |
| Contact | https://commodityclassic.com/ |

