

# AgrAbility e·Note

February 2023

*A monthly update for AgrAbility projects and friends of AgrAbility*

## National AgrAbility Project News

### NTW Updates

- Register for the NTW! [Click HERE](#) to go to the NTW website where one can find more detailed information. The registration link is on the registration tab.
- Reserve a hotel room. You can [click HERE](#) to go to the Hotel reservation page. One can also go to the hotel tab on the NTW website to find more information and the link to reserve a room. The room block closes on February 21st, so don't miss out.
- Anyone aware of someone that might like to be an exhibitor or a sponsor? Send them this link for the [NTW tab on the NAP website](#) and tell them to click on the Exhibitor or Sponsor tab, or send their contact information to Tess-[tmckeel@goodwillfingerlakes.org](mailto:tmckeel@goodwillfingerlakes.org).
- Put together a SRAP raffle basket and/or collect auctions items. Both activities help the NAP to bring farmer clients to the NTW. Items can be shipped ahead of time to [More](#)



For any questions about the NTW, contact Tess at [tmckeel@goodwillfingerlakes.org](mailto:tmckeel@goodwillfingerlakes.org).

The NAP does not currently have any upcoming regional workshops scheduled but would love to host one with an interested SRAP. If interested, please contact Tess [tmckeel@goodwillfingerlakes.org](mailto:tmckeel@goodwillfingerlakes.org) or JoBeth [jbrath@goodwillfingerlakes.org](mailto:jbrath@goodwillfingerlakes.org) for more information.



AgrAbility/North Central Farm and Ranch Stress Assistance Center webinar: "Let's Talk about Rural Caregiving and Mental Health: Everyone needs to be included in the conversation," Wednesday, March 1 at 1:00 p.m. ET. [More](#)

Join with the AgrAbility Marketing & Media Community of Interest for the AgrAbility monthly Zoom discussion on public awareness issues, including tips on writing and on working with the media, Thursday, February 23 at 2:00 p.m. ET. The URL was sent via the listserv.

National AgrAbility partner AgriSafe has announced the new AgriStress Response Partnership Campaign. AgriStress Response® is an initiative to increase positive mental health outcomes among individuals in

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## Toolbox Spotlight



Sometimes, very simple solutions can be very helpful. With this [Push Mower Mounted Generator](#), Robert Boody of Bloomfield, NY, wheels it easily around his property without lifting and carrying. Mounting merely involved bolting the generator's tubular frame onto an old mower's deck.

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## State and Regional AgrAbility Project News

### Alaska

The Alaska AgrAbility Winter eNewsletter was distributed on January 30th raising awareness for Radon Action and Mental Wellness Months. Read more at <https://tinyurl.com/236j53f3>.

Assistive Technology of Alaska (ATLA) provided general awareness presentations for The Office of Long-Term Care Ombudsman and St. Elias Virtual Hospital.

DeShana York gave a presentation to the membership of the Anchorage Garden Club and increased awareness of the AKAgrAbility project



Through an AARP Community Challenge grant, Art Nash, project PI, installed raised beds at the Palmer Senior Center in Palmer, Alaska, during the summer of 2021. The installation was featured in the recently released edition of *Community Gardens for People of All Ages*, a free 32-page downloadable PDF tool kit. [More](#)

AKAgrAbility was featured at the Alaska Forum on the Environment the week of Feb 6-10 where over 350 attendees from all over the state of Alaska attended at the Dena'ina Center in Anchorage.

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### Colorado

Tucked away in two small rural areas of Colorado, on its border with New Mexico, are Federal Reservations for the Southern Ute Tribe in Ignacio and the Mountain Ute Tribe outside of Cortez. Through contact initially with the veterans of the tribes, Colorado AgrAbility staff's veteran outreach has opened dialog with the Southern Ute Veterans Association to offer AgrAbility trainings targeted to programs available to underserved populations. [More](#)

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### Florida

Florida AgrAbility was in attendance at the South Florida Fair in West Palm Beach, FL. Lindsey Head and Vanessa Starr Spero shared a booth with Florida 4-H.





As a part of the Center for Independent Living Day at the Capitol, Serap Gorucu, Lindsey Head, and Tony Delisle met with the state legislators and representatives and educated them on the Florida AgrAbility Project in Tallahassee on January 26, 2023.

Florida AgrAbility team members met with John Diaz, president of the Coalition of Florida Extension for Latino Communities (*CAFE Latino*) to brainstorm about AgrAbility collaborations.

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## Georgia

AgrAbility in Georgia staff had a booth at the Southeast Regional Fruit and Vegetable Conference in Savannah, Georgia, January 5th-8th. [More](#)



On January 4th, Georgia AgrAbility had a great time doing a virtual meet and greet with Florida AgrAbility! [More](#)



Staff attended the Mental Health Day at the Georgia Capitol which was held on 31 January, 2023 in Atlanta, GA. The event highlighted the importance of promoting a healthier and more resilient Georgia. [More](#)

Georgia AgrAbility, in conjunction with the Farm and Ranch Stress Assistance Network, is offering QPR (Question Persuade Refer) and MHFA (Mental Health First Aid) virtual trainings... [More](#)

AgrAbility in Georgia is excited to be part the new agrileadHER virtual community. Women in agriculture from all states are welcome to join. Members have access to exclusive webinars and events and can connect with each other through chats and posts. [More](#)



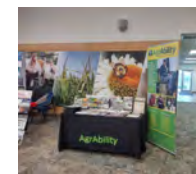
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## Indiana



Mid-January is the regular time for the Fort Wayne Farm Show in the War Memorial Coliseum in Fort Wayne, Indiana. The three-day show is attended by over 35,000 visitors and has over 1,000 exhibitors, of which Indiana AgrAbility was one. [More](#)

January is also the time for the Indiana Horticulture Congress. This year the conference was held at the Beck Agricultural Center on the grounds of the Purdue University Agronomy Center for Research and Education. [More](#)



Bill Field and Paul Jones joined with consultant Ed Bell and staff from Life Essentials for a presentation on accessible agriculture for the [AgrInstitute Agricultural Leadership Program](#) (ALP) on January 12. ALP involves a series of seminars that are designed to seed knowledge and advance the capacity of agricultural leadership.

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## Maine



AgrAbility staff participated in the 2023 Maine Agricultural Trade Show in Augusta, Maine, January 10-12. Using "Pain" as this year's theme, staff had 160 conversations and 19 client contact requests. [More](#)

Boots-2-Bushels received a \$50k grant from the Extension Risk Management Education program for the period 4/22 - 9/24. [More](#)



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.

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## Michigan

The Michigan AgrAbility staff is continuing to work with their farmers throughout the winter season and is currently helping a farmer determine a safer solution for getting into a tractor than a step ladder - something which recently resulted in a weeklong hospitalization due to injuries from a fall.

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## Missouri

Missouri AgrAbility recently had a young man with a concussion join 4-H specifically to be involved in the 4-H Save Your Brain program. He is going to be leading programmatic efforts in Naylor, MO. He is specifically interested in ATV/UTV safety.

Missouri AgrAbility focused its social media efforts on program promotion, opportunities and resources for farmers, and health, safety, and wellness tips. [More](#)



Missouri AgrAbility was involved at three in-person conferences this month. Staff members provided education-based presentations, shared resources and information about preventing secondary injuries, facilitated hands-on demonstrations, [More](#)

Missouri AgrAbility staff continued to plan an Armed to Farm Conference. [More](#)

Lincoln University Innovative Small Farmer's Program Outreach (ISFOP) Workers Angela Brattin, Mary Bolling, and Demetrius Moore joined the University of Missouri Extension's Karen Funkenbusch at AgConnect, [More](#)



Susan Jaster, ISFOP and outreach coordinator for Missouri AgrAbility, collaborated with MU Extension's Kathy Dothage, co-director, Missouri Farm and Ranch Stress Program to present "Stress on the Farm" at the Missouri Dairy Expo... [More](#)

Maureen Cunningham, Brain Injury Association of Missouri executive director and Missouri AgrAbility co-PI, participated in networking opportunities to establish and strengthen awareness and utilization of Missouri AgrAbility. [More](#)

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## Nebraska

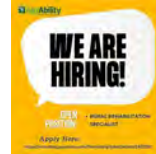


In January, the Nebraska AgrAbility team met in Kearney, Nebraska, to share resources and plan FY2023. At the meeting, Aaron Yoder set up a Teams channel to facilitate communications and resource sharing. [More](#)

Emily Jacobson reports that Nebraska AgrAbility is in the process of signing a contract to work with an OTD student from the College of Saint Mary in Omaha, Nebraska, beginning January 2024. [More](#)

Nebraska AgrAbility, through Easterseals Nebraska, is looking for a

professional who has the ability to provide comprehensive education and rehabilitation technology services to Nebraska farmers and ranchers with disabilities. [More](#)



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## New Mexico

Equipment that will support food producers has been acquired by the NM Technology Assistance Program (NMTAP), and is already being requested by community members.

NMTAP will host a UNM OT service-learning student.

NMTAP had a table at Disability Awareness Day at the NM Capital on February 8 to highlight New Mexico AgrAbility Project (NMAP) services available for farmers.

Mandy's Farm, NMAP nonprofit partner, has installed an improved ADA toilet facility for use by employees and seven agricultural apprentices (2-3 days/week in February).

The group of apprentice food growers with disabilities will go to the NM Roundhouse (capital building) on February 8 for Disability Awareness Day.

A local restaurant (M'Tucci's restaurant in Albuquerque) has requested certain crops for seasonal specials to be grown by the agricultural apprentices.

UNM will provide three service-learning occupational therapy students to Mandy's Farm and to NM Technology Assistance Program in order to improve training of rehabilitation professionals while drawing positive attention to student projects and the NMAP. [More](#)

February 16th is Ag-fest in Santa Fe to coincide with the NM legislative session). NM Dairy Extension will have NMAP materials available to make the community aware of NMAP services available for food growers.

One prospective farm site evaluation fell through, but a training has been developed for OTs and PTs for CEU hours to inform the rehab professionals of nationally and locally available services to support agricultural workers. Upon state approval, the continuing education opportunity will be offered online to rural NM locations.

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## North Carolina



NC AgrAbility staff attended the Berry Berry Extraordinary Workshop January 20 in Whitsett, NC, provided by the Peacehaven Community Farm, which connects people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) to the larger community... [More](#)

January 10, NC AgrAbility staff went on a farm visit to Dudley, NC, with several of the regional support programs that a farmer is working with: Black Family Land Trust, RAFI, and veteran representatives. [More](#)

NC AgrAbility and Benevolence Farm staff met January 25 to explore partnership opportunities. This farm trains formerly incarcerated women in agricultural production and micro-entrepreneurship. They serve an average of 12 women a year.

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## Ohio

Ohio AgrAbility enjoys a collaborative relationship with assistive technology (AT) vendors. Some of the best days for Ohio AgrAbility staff are equipment delivery days - [More](#)

Hal is a farmer in northwest Ohio. He and his wife operate Hopes Blessings, LLC, a therapeutic horse farm. Hal is paralyzed and was limited in what he was able to do on the farm. Ohio AgrAbility staff worked with Hal and OOD to complete a farm assessment and advocated for AT to keep Hal farming.

[More](#)



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## Pennsylvania

It's January, and in Pennsylvania that means INDOOR FARM SHOWS! AgrAbility PA staff presented and exhibited at two farm shows taking place the same week in January.

Kendra Martin delivered a presentation to attendees at the 107th Pennsylvania Farm Show. Kendra shared a 30-minute session on AgrAbility and how it assists Pennsylvania farmers. [More](#)



Abbie Spackman and Linda Fetzer staffed an interactive exhibit at the Keystone Farm Show. This three-day show is one of the largest commercial farm equipment trade shows in the area. [More](#)

Abbie Spackman and Linda Fetzer provided an educational session at the Messick's Open House event. [More](#)

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## South Carolina

The staff from Clemson met with their partner, Able SC, to discuss upcoming projects they have planned for the residents of South Carolina. [More](#)

Staff members are also working with students in the Department of Agricultural Sciences at Clemson University on capstone projects. [More](#)

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## Tennessee

TN AgrAbility began 2023 partnering with the Farmer Veteran Coalition of TN to exhibit and network at the TN Cattlemen's Association Winter Meeting, "New Year, New Ideas." [More](#)

The STAR Center, TN AgrAbility's non-profit partner, has a commitment to helping people with disabilities, like Alzheimer's, reach their full potential.

[More](#)



TN AgrAbility participated in the informational Farmer Veteran Coalition of TN funding webinar. [More](#)



TN AgrAbility exhibited at the Tennessee Grain & Soybean Producers Conferences. [More](#)

UT Gardens, FrontLine Gardens, and TN AgrAbility held their first monthly lunch and learn session in January. [More](#)

TN AgrAbility presented at the first session of the 2023 Master Farm Family and Health Wellness Program during January. [More](#)

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## Texas

Texas AgrAbility hosted a lunch & learn webinar, "Funding for Agricultural Assistive Technology," in partnership with Texas Workforce Commission Vocational Rehabilitation. [More](#)

BattleGround to Breaking Ground (BGBG) hosted a five-day agriculture training bootcamp. [More](#)

Battleground to Breaking Ground graduated six participants as well as six certified BGBG mentors in January. The mentors and graduates were part of a panel for incoming BGBG participants.

Farmer Veteran Coalition CEO Jeanette Lombardo joined BattleGround to Breaking Ground and Texas AgrAbility at the graduation event to present \$1,000 stipends to program graduates. The stipends can be used to support expanding their agriculture operation.

Texas AgrAbility staff conducted a farm assessment for a long-time AgrAbility partner on his grass-fed beef, poultry, and specialty crops operation. This assessment was also utilized to train new staff and partners on the farm and ranch assessment process.

The Texas AgrAbility Peer Group is highlighted as the February lunch & learn session and will have its first group meeting on March 1st.



Texas AgrAbility hosted a quarterly advisory committee meeting where stakeholders, partners, and clients met to provide feedback and direction for upcoming initiatives. Members were connected with resources related to mental health support for farmers and ranchers.

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## Utah

The AgrAbility of Utah staff was excited to set up a display booth at the first ever Utah Hay and Forage Symposium at the Dixie Convention Center in St. George, UT, on Jan. 26th and 27th. [More](#)

On Jan. 23, AgrAbility of Utah staff attended and presented at the Cache Interagency Council in Logan, UT.

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## Virginia

The Virginia AgrAbility team continues to engage with community members in a variety of ways. [More](#)



Staff also exhibited at the Virginia Farm Show in Fishersville alongside AgriSafe Network and East Coast Trackchairs to share resources available from all three organizations related to farming with a disability or health challenge.

The Virginia Forage Growers Conference was held in multiple locations throughout Virginia. The Virginia AgrAbility team exhibited at the Blackstone and Weyers Cave events.

Perhaps one of the most unique events held this month was a "Farmer Dinner Theater" put on by Virginia Cooperative Extension and AgrAbility Field Agent Jeremy Daubert. [More](#)

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## Washington

The Washington AgrAbility co-coordinators are still attending numerous conferences and

agricultural gatherings throughout the state and preparing for the AgrAbility National Training Workshop in Spokane, WA, in March.

Debbie attended the Cherry Institute Conference in Yakima, WA, and exhibited for over 400 attendees for both AgrAbility and farm stress. She also scheduled a QPR (Question, Persuade, Refer) training for their work source team.

Deb, Debbie, Don, and Curt Johnson attended the WSU (Washington State University) Winter School/Country Living Expo in Stanwood, WA, along with 1000 attendees. Curt taught two classes about AgrAbility and assistive technology, and Deb and Debbie exhibited and left with 35 potential clients for AgrAbility.

Debbie attended the Affiliated Tribes of the Northwest Conference in Portland, Oregon, and staffed a display for over 400 attendees on AgrAbility and farm stress.

Emily attended the Washington Association of Landscape Professionals conference and exhibited for AgrAbility. She displayed various AT items, and the booth drew much attention from attendees (both business owners and employees).

Emily attended the Northwest Agricultural Show in Salem, OR, where she networked with Washington companies and learned about new assistive technology.

Alyssa attended the Pacific Northwest Direct Seed Cropping Conference in Kennewick, WA, where she staffed a booth for AgrAbility and farm stress for over 250 attendees.

Alyssa attended the Hay Growers Conference in Kennewick, WA, and exhibited for over 400 attendees on AgrAbility and farm stress.

Alyssa also attended and exhibited at two WSU Dryland Wheat Producers yearly meetings in both Ritzville and Davenport, WA. There were around 100 attendees at each event.

Don and Alyssa staffed a display at the Washington-Oregon Potato Conference in Kennewick, WA, with over 1500 attendees for AgrAbility and Farm Stress.

Debbie has two new clients who are ready for home visits. Deb just concluded working with two clients and is getting ready for several new clients. Emily and Alyssa are pursuing some potential clients as well.

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## International AgrAbility Network News

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### **AgrAbility for Africa**

The AgrAbility for Africa staff are excited about the forthcoming inaugural AgrAbility for Africa workshop that is slated to take place in Uganda June 5-6, 2023. [More](#)

Collaborations and partnerships are greatly helping AgrAbility for Africa boost communication and AgrAbility for Africa disability services awareness efforts among the Lake Victoria islands (approximate 84 clusters). [More](#)



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## Staff Changes and Recognition



## Nebraska



### Cheers to 21 years! Rod Peterson Retires

Rod Peterson has been with Easterseals Nebraska/Nebraska AgrAbility project since 2002, serving as a rural rehabilitation specialist and program manager. His friendly demeanor, commitment to quality service/solutions, and vast knowledge of agricultural operations are just a few of the many traits his clients and colleagues have admired.

Rod and his wife Susan plan to travel and spend time with their children and grandkids, running about from softball and volleyball games to rodeos! Please join us in congratulating Rod on his many achievements and thank him for 21 years of service to Nebraska farmers and ranchers.

## North Carolina

Beatriz Rodriguez has been serving as an NC Farmworker Health Program Governing Board member since 2018. This year she is honored to serve as the board chair.

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### AgrAbility in the News

#### Click titles below for news stories featuring AgrAbility projects .

- [Indiana AgrAbility farmer to speak at 2023 AgrAbility National Training Workshop](#) (Indiana AgrAbility Project)
- [Lending a Hand: AgrAbility PA help farmers stay in the field](#) - See Page 33 (AgrAbility for Pennsylvanians)
- [Program designed to help farmers with disabilities coming to South Carolina](#) (AgrAbility in South Carolina, National AgrAbility)
- [AgrAbility workshop scheduled for Feb. 17 at Logan County Extension office](#) (Colorado AgrAbility Project)

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### Other News

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

- Emily from Washington State AgrAbility Project learned about a Pacific Northwest company called [Working Concepts](#). They make “extreme standing mats” that offer an inch of foam padding and are OSHA compliant. They also have kneeling pads and non-strap knee pads that can be inserted into workwear.
- [New SARE Publication Available to Farmers Seeking Organic Certification](#)
- [Sleep and Your Health](#) - a Talking Total Farmer Health Podcast
- [USDA Announces Renewed Partnership with Tribal Colleges and Historic Realignment](#)
- [Farmer Veteran Coalition, Announces 2023 Farmer Veteran Fellowship Fund Opportunity](#)
- [Transitioning to Organic Production](#)
- [AFBF Signs Right to Repair Memorandum of Understanding with John Deere](#)
- [USDA Introduces an E-Application for the 1890 National Scholars Program](#)
- [Rice breeding breakthrough could feed billions](#)
- [USDA's Farm Service Agency helps farmers tackle challenges](#)

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### Upcoming Events

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

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

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February 2023

## National AgrAbility Project

### NTW Updates



- Put together a SRAP raffle basket and/or collect auctions items. Both activities help the NAP to bring farmer clients to the NTW. 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 or raffle basket and let Kim know that an item is being shipped to her. Her email is [kjdevries@wsu.edu](mailto:kjdevries@wsu.edu), or one can call her at 360-333-1067.

For any questions about the NTW, contact Tess at [tmckeel@goodwillfingerlakes.org](mailto:tmckeel@goodwillfingerlakes.org).

Submitted by Goodwill of the Finger Lakes

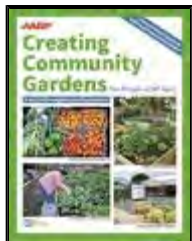


National AgrAbility partner AgriSafe has announced the new AgriStress Response Partnership Campaign. AgriStress Response® is an initiative to increase positive mental health outcomes among individuals in agriculture, forestry, and fishing. The mission is to respond to restore hope, to eliminate the stigma surrounding mental health, and to increase awareness and access to support for mental health, stress, depression, anxiety, and suicide in agricultural communities. AgriSafe invites everyone to make the pledge to be an AgriStress Response partner today - by filling out [this form](#) to join them in their mission.

Submitted by AgriSafe

February 2023

## Alaska



Through an AARP Community Challenge grant, Art Nash, project PI, installed raised beds at the Palmer Senior Center in Palmer, Alaska, during the summer of 2021. The installation was featured in the recently released edition of *Community Gardens for People of All Ages*, a free 32-page downloadable PDF tool kit. Through the Challenge grant, AKAgrAbility was able to partner to distribute accessible gardening and other educational information involving tools and resources for those considering gardening as they age.

The AARP tool kit also includes worksheets to assist communities with planning and organizing community gardens. An accessibility checklist is included to aid in organizing gardens around accessible aspects such as walkways, planters, plots, tools, parking, seating, and restrooms.

Submitted by DeShana York

February 2023

## Colorado

Tucked away in two small rural areas of Colorado, on its border with New Mexico, are Federal Reservations for the Southern Ute Tribe in Ignacio and the Mountain Ute Tribe outside of Cortez. The people who make up the tribes are often forgotten or bypassed by the larger non-indigenous populations around them. Through contact initially with the veterans of the tribes, Colorado AgrAbility staff's veteran outreach has opened dialog with the Southern Ute Veterans Association to offer AgrAbility trainings targeted to programs available to underserved populations. Staff will participate in several meetings with tribal officials over the next few months intended to pave the way for services that will be available in Ignacio. The Colorado AgrAbility Project looks forward to offering greater detail into this outreach in future e-Notes.

Submitted by Jim Craig

February 2023

## Georgia

AgrAbility in Georgia staff had a booth at the Southeast Regional Fruit and Vegetable Conference in Savannah, Georgia, January 5th-8th. Hosted in Savannah annually, the event draws farmers from several states in the Southeast as well as industry support professionals. Staff were able to make some great connections for the project.



On January 4th, Georgia AgrAbility had a great time doing a virtual meet and greet with Florida AgrAbility! Staff are so excited for Florida to have an AgrAbility program. The GA staff were able to share a few tips with them that they had learned over the years. Best of luck to Florida, as they are now part of the AgrAbility family!



Staff attended the Mental Health Day at the Georgia Capitol which was held on 31 January, 2023 in Atlanta, GA. The event highlighted the importance of promoting a healthier and more resilient Georgia. Various state agencies and organizations celebrated recent successes, followed by the opportunity to visit and discuss with



representatives.

Georgia AgrAbility, in conjunction with the Farm and Ranch Stress Assistance Network, is offering QPR (Question Persuade Refer) and MHFA (Mental Health First Aid) virtual trainings to give people the skills they need to reach out and provide initial help and support to someone who may be developing a mental health or substance use problem or experiencing a crisis. These trainings are free and will provide participants with three simple steps anyone can learn to help save a life from suicide. Learn more by visiting <https://www.farmandranchstress.com/training>.

AgrAbility in Georgia is excited to be part the new agrileadHER virtual community. Women in agriculture from all states are welcome to join. Members have access to exclusive webinars and events and can connect with each other through chats and posts. A flyer can be downloaded [HERE](#). In addition to the virtual community, there is also an annual conference. It will be held November 1-2, 2023. At the last conference, women from 29 states attend. Staff are looking forward to another great event.



Submitted by AgrAbility in Georgia

February 2023

## Indiana



Mid-January is the regular time for the Fort Wayne Farm Show in the War Memorial Coliseum in Fort Wayne, Indiana. The three-day show is attended by over 35,000 visitors and has over 1,000 exhibitors, of which Indiana AgrAbility was one. Attendees and exhibitors come primarily from Indiana, Ohio, and Michigan. Bev Berens from Michigan AgrAbility and Indiana AgrAbility staff members staffed the display that included

AgrAbility brochures, arthritis materials, veteran outreach materials, and the LifeLyfts by Life Essentials John Deere tractor and lift.

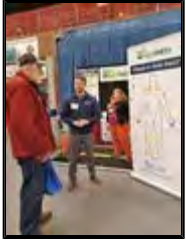
January is also the time for the Indiana Horticulture Congress. This year the conference was held at the Beck Agricultural Center on the grounds of the Purdue University Agronomy Center for Research and Education. Indiana AgrAbility, Indiana AgVet program, and Gearing Up for Safety had an exhibit for the two-day conference. Attendees had sessions on farming basics, small fruits, apples, food safety, fresh vegetables, and business and marketing. Ed Sheldon from Indiana AgrAbility, Indiana AgVets, and Gearing Up for Safety presented a session on farm safety and AgrAbility.



Submitted by Steve Swain

February 2023

## Maine



AgrAbility staff participated in the 2023 Maine Agricultural Trade Show in Augusta, Maine, January 10-12. Using "Pain" as this year's theme, staff had 160 conversations and 19 client contact requests. Additionally, AgrAbility's OT doctoral student, who is helping to validate a staff-developed tool to rate pain, signed up 30 people willing to be part of that validation study.



Boots-2-Bushels received a \$50k grant from the Extension Risk Management Education program for the period 4/22 - 9/24. Funds will be used to support the programming for beginning farmers with priority to veterans and farmers with a disability. There are currently 42 registered for the 2023 cohort, and classes began on January 17th.



Submitted by Anne Martin



February 2023

## Missouri

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



Missouri AgrAbility was involved at three in-person conferences this month. Staff members provided education-based presentations, shared resources and information about preventing secondary injuries, facilitated hands-on demonstrations, and promoted AgrAbility marketing and networking initiatives. Conferences included: Great Plains

Growers Conference, January 10 - January 12; Missouri Dairy Expo 2023, January 20; and AgConnect, January 21 - 22.

Missouri AgrAbility staff continued to plan an Armed to Farm Conference. National Center for Appropriate Technology (NCAT) is teaming up with the Columbia Center for Urban Agriculture's Veterans Urban Farm program and University of Missouri Extension to bring NCAT's Armed to Farm training to Missouri for the first time. This sustainable agriculture training is for veterans in the Midwest, with preference given to those in Missouri. The number of participants will be limited. Armed to Farm will take place April 10-14 in Columbia, Missouri.

Submitted by: Emily Doosing, Tevin Utlauh, Elizabeth Picking, and Karen Funkenbusch

Lincoln University Innovative Small Farmer's Program Outreach (ISFOP) Workers Angela Brattin, Mary Bolling, and Demetrius Moore joined the University of Missouri Extension's Karen



Funkenbusch at AgConnect, an event connecting small farmers to resources in Southeast Missouri. Local farmers, families, and veterans were able to receive information on stress relief and suicide prevention, farm safety, and many USDA programs available to them.



Susan Jaster, ISFOP and outreach coordinator for Missouri AgrAbility, collaborated with MU Extension's Kathy Dothage, co-director, Missouri Farm and Ranch Stress Program to present "Stress on the Farm" at the Missouri Dairy Expo in Springfield, Missouri, on January 20th. Invited speakers spoke about how to help farmers and their families understand the effects of stress on the mind and body and how to manage it effectively during difficult times. Forty-five attendees each received the stress relief information and resources for suicide prevention.

Submitted by: Mary Bolling

Maureen Cunningham, Brain Injury Association of Missouri executive director and Missouri AgrAbility co-PI, participated in networking opportunities to establish and strengthen awareness and utilization of Missouri AgrAbility. These meetings included the Missouri Association of Rehab Facilities on January 17 and 18, 2023. There was also a new-contact meeting with the Jessica Giacone of the Missouri

Association of Trauma Nurses to explore opportunities to connect farmers with disabilities to Missouri AgrAbility early in the recovery process. Ms. Cunningham participated in the Kansas City VA Medical Center Quarterly Congressional Meeting to maintain awareness and contacts of services for veterans with brain injury through the Kansas City VA.

Submitted by: Maureen Cunningham

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February 2023

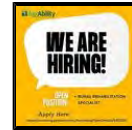
## Nebraska



In January, the Nebraska AgrAbility team met in Kearney, Nebraska, to share resources and plan FY2023. At the meeting, Aaron Yoder set up a Teams channel to facilitate communications and resource sharing. University of Nebraska-Kearney graduate student Jada Ruff attended the meeting to learn more about AgrAbility. After she graduates in May, Jada will join Nebraska Extension as a food, nutrition, and health educator. Jada is very interested in Nebraska AgrAbility and hopes to be involved in the program.

Emily Jacobson reports that Nebraska AgrAbility is in the process of signing a contract to work with an OTD student from the College of Saint Mary in Omaha, Nebraska, beginning January 2024. The student's doctoral capstone project focuses on helping individuals in agricultural professions transition back to agriculture-related work following an injury. This is an exciting collaborative opportunity for the student and for Nebraska AgrAbility.

Nebraska AgrAbility, through Easterseals Nebraska, is looking for a professional who has the ability to provide comprehensive education and rehabilitation technology services to Nebraska farmers and ranchers with disabilities. Help us spread the word! Position description/apply - <https://recruiting.paylocity.com/Recruiting/Jobs/Details/1422516>



Submitted by Soni Cochran

February 2023

## New Mexico

UNM will provide three service-learning occupational therapy students to Mandy's Farm and to NM Technology Assistance Program in order to improve training of rehabilitation professionals while drawing positive attention to student projects and the NMAP. Patricia Siegel is the UNM professor working with OT students creating short-form educational materials related to ergonomics, injury prevention, and maintaining functional ability. The NMAP team will review the materials and focus on posting them on the NMAP website soon.

Submitted by New Mexico AgrAbility Project

February 2023

## North Carolina



NC AgrAbility staff attended the Berry Berry Extraordinary Workshop January 20 in Whitsett, NC, provided by the Peacehaven Community Farm, which connects people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) to the larger community through shared living and the work of a sustainable farm. The two organizations have been collaborating on their advisory boards and seek to continue serving farmers with IDD.

January 10, NC AgrAbility staff went on a farm visit to Dudley, NC, with several of the regional support programs that a farmer is working with: Black Family Land Trust, RAFI, and veteran representatives. The visit resulted in an extraordinary interest in collaborating with training service providers who are not very familiar with farming, such as NC Assistive Technology Program, NC VR counselors, and VA Veteran Readiness and Employment counselors.

Submitted by Beatriz (Betty) Rodriguez

February 2023

## Ohio

Ohio AgrAbility enjoys a collaborative relationship with assistive technology (AT) vendors. Some of the best days for Ohio AgrAbility staff are equipment delivery days - the result of many farm visits, building rapport with the farmer, writing assessments for Ohio's Vocational Rehabilitation agency (Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities [OOD]), and coordinating with the vendors. All of the hard work is worth it when the farmer receives the AT and they can continue working safely and productively.

Hal is a farmer in northwest Ohio. He and his wife operate Hopes Blessings, LLC, a therapeutic horse farm. Hal is paralyzed and was limited in what he was able to do on the farm. Ohio AgrAbility staff worked with Hal and OOD to complete a farm assessment and advocated for AT to keep Hal farming. Hal was approved for an Action Track Chair to give him access to his barns and fields. He has this to say about receiving an Action Track Chair:

"I'm very excited to be able to get in with the horses, feed them, and lead them. Also, to take the dog for a walk on the leash. I'm also excited to be able to go hiking with my family. There are very few places I can take my regular chair, and this will open a whole new world of opportunities for us."

The delivery day photo shows (left to right) Rachel Jarman, Randy Joseph (Ohio AgrAbility), Hal, Kim and Jade McCabe (McCabe Outdoors)



Submitted by: Rachel Jarman and Laura Akgerman

February 2023

## Pennsylvania

Kendra Martin delivered a presentation to attendees at the 107th Pennsylvania Farm Show. Kendra shared a 30-minute session on AgrAbility and how it assists Pennsylvania farmers. The presentation was captured by the state's cable network, PCN, and was broadcast across the state several times in the week that followed. Several legislative and networking opportunities have resulted from this outreach event.



Abbie Spackman and Linda Fetzer staffed an interactive exhibit at the Keystone Farm Show. This three-day show is one of the largest commercial farm equipment trade shows in the area. AgrAbility provided hands-on assistive technology (AT) demos, including a grain bin level indicator, winter AT, hand injury AT, and educational handouts.



Abbie Spackman and Linda Fetzer provided an educational session at the Messick's Open House event. They provided information on AgrAbility and ag safety and health, and they gave demonstrations that included a grain bin level indicator demo, hand injury AT, and more. Messick's is an agricultural equipment dealer in central PA.

Submitted by Kendra Martin

February 2023

## South Carolina

The staff from Clemson met with their partner, Able SC, to discuss upcoming projects they have planned for the residents of South Carolina. The staff's first objective is to coordinate joint workshops to train Clemson and SC State members on the language and presentation of disabilities from the perspective of Able SC's long-term relationships with the disabled of South Carolina. Likewise, staff from Clemson and SC State will coordinate trips to some of the agricultural research stations throughout South Carolina. Able SC staff will be able to learn about many of the agricultural practices in the state. This exposure to some of the complexities in farm settings will help Able SC's staff inform AgrAbility staff of the challenges that people of different disabilities may experience.

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Staff members are also working with students in the Department of Agricultural Sciences at Clemson University on capstone projects. One of the projects includes modifications in an aquaponics system to allow an individual to farm. Modifications include a device to easily harvest fish and elevated plant growing beds to allow a person to stand up and garden or to move low enough for an individual in a wheelchair to also garden. The other project includes modifications in a tractor cab for the operator to have visual devices surrounding the tractor so that a clear 360-degree view is achieved.

Submitted by South Carolina AgrAbility Project



February 2023

## Tennessee

TN AgrAbility began 2023 partnering with the Farmer Veteran Coalition of TN to exhibit and network at the TN Cattlemen's Association Winter Meeting, "New Year, New Ideas." Thank you to Dr. Temple Grandin, an animal behaviorist and livestock handling expert, who presented information on providing correct care of cattle and safe animal handling, which is very important for the producers. She also spoke on how autism allows her to understand the behavioral aspects of livestock better.



The STAR Center, TN AgrAbility's non-profit partner, has a commitment to helping people with disabilities, like Alzheimer's, reach their full potential. In January, STAR featured ways to improve a client's quality of life with Alzheimer's through music therapy. Music offers a host of benefits for Alzheimer's patients in varying stages of the disease. Studies show music therapy improves a patient's focus, improves their ability to communicate with those close to them, and may lower their dependence on psychiatric drugs.

TN AgrAbility participated in the informational Farmer Veteran Coalition of TN funding webinar. Past Farmer Veteran Fellowship Fund awardees described how the funding assisted them as beginning farmers and explained useful tips on how to apply for the competitive grant of up to \$5,000.[BCF1] The webinar featured Jennifer Anthony-Waller, Second Harvest Food Bank of Middle Tennessee Farm-to-Families coordinator. Jennifer discussed the agreement with USDA's Ag Marketing Service (AMS) and the Local Food Purchase Assistance Cooperative Agreement Program (LFPA). Through LFPA, the TN Department of Agriculture seeks to purchase and distribute locally grown, produced, and processed food from underserved producers. Kelly Bumpus, Ag Launch director of product development, explained how hosting field trials on the farm can lead to a passive income stream to build wealth.



TN AgrAbility exhibited at the Tennessee Grain & Soybean Producers Conferences. TNAP's goal in participating in exhibits, field days, and trade shows with its educational exhibit is to help inform producers of any assistive technologies that are available to help them with their physical disability so they can continue farming. TNAP staff promoted TN AgrAbility programs as well as the TN Grain Bin Safety/Rescue Awareness Trainings coordinated by TN AgrAbility, TN Association of Rescue Squads, and UT/TSU Extension. Each day featured breakout educational sessions with excellent speakers.

UT Gardens, FrontLine Gardens, and TN AgrAbility held their first monthly lunch and learn session in January. Participants learned a variety of garden topics from Master Gardeners and UT Gardens staff, shared their successes, and learned from other gardeners during this informational session. Sessions are held every third Thursday at noon Eastern Time and are free for veterans and Master Gardeners. One can register at: <https://utgardens.wildapricot.org/event-5107327>. Additional information about Frontline Gardens can be found at: <https://frontlinegardens.org/>.

TN AgrAbility presented at the first session of the [2023 Master Farm Family and Health Wellness Program](#) during January. This is an educational outreach program to provide farm families with the tools to cope and thrive with the unique challenges facing farm families. Brian Robinson with the TN Association of Rescue Squads talked about safety around farm equipment, moving farm equipment, and handling livestock safely. Future webinar topics include grain bin safety, healthy habits to maximize mental health, medical warning signs, talking about tough topics, vision and hearing, safe livestock handling, farmland legacy, and crossing the communication gap. The series will also feature program resources that are available to support farmers. This eight-week program will help producers and farm families gain knowledge while also giving them a new area of participation as they continue to find ways to include the Tennessee Agricultural Enhancement Program (TAEP) cost share on their farms.

Submitted by Tennessee AgrAbility Project

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February 2023

## Texas

Texas AgrAbility hosted a lunch & learn webinar, "Funding for Agricultural Assistive Technology," in partnership with Texas Workforce Commission Vocational Rehabilitation. Voc. Rehab. Supervisor Lhea Homesley shared the process of working with VR to support agriculture operations through farm assessments and assistive technology. The webinar recording can be viewed at: <https://youtu.be/ntEn4Jwuz2s>.

BattleGround to Breaking Ground (BGBG) hosted a five-day agriculture training bootcamp. The training offered incoming participants farm tours, farm safety training, resource networking, and agriculture production training. Texas AgrAbility provided farm safety and AgrAbility presentations for the event.

Submitted by Makenzie Thomas

February 2023

## Utah

The AgrAbility of Utah staff was excited to set up a display booth at the first ever Utah Hay and Forage Symposium at the Dixie Convention Center in St. George, UT, on Jan. 26th and 27th. Staff visited with and explained AgrAbility to many of the 300+ farmers and ranchers who attended from throughout the area. Over 30 classes on such topics as cover crops, irrigation, crop rotation, etc., were available for participants to attend.

Submitted by Randall Bagley

February 2023

## Virginia

The Virginia AgrAbility team continues to engage with community members in a variety of ways. This month, the team exhibited at the Virginia Association of Biological Farming Conference held in Roanoke, VA. This conference had a record year for attendance with over 500 present.

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Perhaps one of the most unique events held this month was a "Farmer Dinner Theater" put on by Virginia Cooperative Extension and AgrAbility Field Agent Jeremy Daubert. Jeremy used lighthearted humor, improvisational actors, and an evidence-based guide to address issues related to farm safety and health.

Submitted by Virginia AgrAbility Project

February 2023

## AgrAbility for Africa

The AgrAbility for Africa staff are excited about the forthcoming inaugural AgrAbility for Africa workshop that is slated to take place in Uganda June 5-6, 2023. The event will provide an opportunity for local and international experts in rehabilitation care, assistive technologies, non-governmental organization leaders, global policy makers, and others to understand the barriers of living in rural Africa with disabilities. It will also help in building connections to eliminate the gaps between the needs of those with disabilities and access to health care and assistive technology on the continent

Collaborations and partnerships are greatly helping AgrAbility for Africa boost communication and AgrAbility for Africa disability services awareness efforts among the Lake Victoria islands (approximate 84 clusters). This is increasingly bridging the rehabilitation care, assistive technology, and market information gaps for people with disabilities in Uganda and this part of Africa.



Submitted by Mutumba Faisal

February 2023

## 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/01t4x000002ciNKAAAY>

**Name** QPR for Farmers and Farm Families  
**Dates** February 16, 2023  
**City, State** Virtual Online  
**Contact Info/Web link** <https://www.agrisafe.org/event/qpr-for-farmers-and-farm-families-14/>

**Name** 2023 Georgia Organics Conference & Expo  
**Dates** February 16-18, 2023  
**City, State** Perry, Georgia  
**Contact Info/Web link** <https://www.georgiaorganics.org/conference>

**Name** Agricultural Outlook Forum  
**Dates** February 23-24, 2023  
**City, State** Arlington, Virginia, and online  
**Contact Info/Web link** [https://www.usda.gov/oce/ag-outlook-forum?utm\\_name=](https://www.usda.gov/oce/ag-outlook-forum?utm_name=)

**Name** 2023 Commodity Classic  
**Dates** March 9-11, 2023  
**City, State** Orlando, Florida  
**Contact Info/Web link** <https://commodityclassic.com/>

**Name** Armed to Farm Conference  
**Dates** April 10-14, 2023  
**City, State** Columbia, Missouri  
**Contact Info/Web link** <https://www.armedtofarm.org/>

**link**

**Name** National 4-H Conference

**Dates** April 14-19, 2023

**City, State** Arlington, Virginia

**Contact Info/Web link** <https://tinyurl.com/zjbmxcbr>

**Name** Horse Progress Days

**Dates** June 30 - July 1, 2023

**City, State** Shipshewana, Indiana

**Contact Info/Web link** <https://horseprogressdays.com/>

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