

AgrAbility e•Note

March 2023

A monthly update for AgrAbility projects and friends of AgrAbility

National AgrAbility Project News

The 2023 NTW is just a few days away! NAP staff are excited to see everyone! Over 250 people have registered. If you have not, don't miss out. March 13th is the last day to register.



Things to remember:

1. **Put together your state raffle basket.** The state raffle baskets have been a hit. Put together a basket with items from your state or any theme that you would like and let's see whose basket gets the most tickets.
2. **Bring auction items.** Don't forget to bring those auction items. Let Tess McKeel know if you are bringing an auction item so we have an idea of how much room we need to set up. If you need to ship an item, information is here.
3. **Bring a snack to share in the hospitality suite.** We love to have items specific to your state to snack on in the hospitality suite. If you are bringing something to share, let us know so that we know what to plan for.
4. **Exhibitors.** We still have space for exhibitors if you know of any organization/company that might want to exhibit. March 13th is the last day to register as an exhibitor also.
5. **GET READY TO HAVE SOME FUN AND LEARN SOME GREAT STUFF!!**

If you have any questions, contact us anytime. Tess McKeel - tmckeel@goodwillfingerlakes.org -585.447.9015 or JoBeth Rath - jbrath@goodwillfingerlakes.org - 585.402.2059

AgrAbility All-Staff Meeting: April 24, 3:00 p.m. EDT. Look for email details coming soon.

NAP staff are currently in the process of planning a regional workshop in Indianapolis for June 6-8. This workshop will focus on veterans and veteran programs. More information will be coming soon.

The NAP would love to host a regional workshop with anyone interested. Please contact Tess tmckeel@goodwillfingerlakes.org or JoBeth jbrath@goodwillfingerlakes.org, for more information.

Mid-February is time for the National Farm Machinery Show at the Kentucky State Fairgrounds in Louisville, Kentucky. The show covers eight interconnected exhibit halls totaling more than 1.2 million square



feet of indoor exhibit space and houses more than 900 exhibitors. [More](#)

NAP partner AgriSafe is offering online QPR training March 16th, 12:00pm - 1:30pm CST.

Registration: [QPR for Farmers and Farm Families](#) - AgriSafe Network

The archive of the AgrAbility/North Central FRSAN webinar, "Let's Talk about Rural Caregiving and Mental Health: Everyone needs to be included in the conversation," is now available at www.agrability.org/training-category/archived.

Toolbox Spotlight

With its 66-inch lift-point reach, this hydraulic-powered [Portable Full-Vehicle Lift Jack](#) will reportedly raise in less than 30 second a 7,000-pound, long-wheelbase vehicle up to 241/2 inches high. Its two lifting frames, once positioned under the vehicle, operate simultaneously off one's 110V AC or 12V DC power unit that's activated via hand-held push-button pendant.



State and Regional AgrAbility Project News

Alaska

The Alaska AgrAbility (AKAgrAbility) team have been planning for spring workshops and assessments as Alaska sees daylight increasing. DeShana York has been working to plan workshops with the Alaska Veterans Affairs Health Care Division and the Anchorage Domiciliary Care for Homeless Veterans Program. [More](#)

On February 18th, DeShana York attended and spoke to the American Parkinson's Disease Association, NW Chapter. She provided information about the AKAgrAbility program and talked about some accessible gardening resources for the group.

On March 4th, AKAgrAbility program information was provided at a vendor fair in conjunction with the 51st Delta Farm Forum in Delta Junction, Alaska. This is a well-attended annual event that is coordinated by the Delta Junction District Office of UAF Cooperative Extension Service and the Salcha-Delta Soil & Water Conservation District. [More](#)

The Alaska team is looking forward to seeing colleagues in the AgrAbility family in Spokane this year for the NTW and gaining knowledge and making new connections!

Colorado

The Colorado AgrAbility Team is expanding! The Colorado AgrAbility Project in the Department of Human Development and Family Studies and Colorado State University Extension (CSUE) are looking to hire four full-time regional extension behavioral health specialists... [More](#)

Florida

Florida AgrAbility (FAP) attended the Florida State Fair on February 11th. It presented brochures, informative banners, and assistive tools, and provided youth with educational games involving adaptive tools.

On February 22nd, Florida AgrAbility held its first meeting with the program's key partners. This meeting allowed all partners to meet, mingle, and educate each other about their programs as well as their role in connecting with Florida AgrAbility. [More](#)

Florida AgrAbility continues conducting farm-site assessments and started using Asana, a project management software, to ensure that all client records and activities are maintained in a safe, organized space. Georgia AgrAbility's YouTube videos provided helpful information and guidance for creating and managing client-related activities.

Georgia

On February 9th, Georgia AgrAbility had a great time doing a virtual meet-and-greet with South Carolina AgrAbility! Staff are so excited for South Carolina to have an AgrAbility program. [More](#)



On February 18th, the Meet at the Shed Initiative hosted an introductory wood carving workshop for men in a rural Georgia community. The Men's Shed is a creative approach to address mental health for older men. [More](#)

The Warren/Glascock County Extension coordinator invited AgrAbility Staff to attend a Cattlemen's Association meeting and present on assistive work technology that AgrAbility can provide or help to provide. Staff members presented on the topic and connected with association members following the meeting. [More](#)

AgrAbility staff members attended the 2023 Georgia Organics Conference and Expo in Perry, Georgia. The event was held February 16-18 with presentations on the 16th and 17th followed by farm tours on Saturday the 18th. [More](#)

GA AgrAbility staff attended the Land and Ladies Woman Landowner Symposium located in Brunswick, GA, on February 23rd and 24th. The purpose of the event was to bring women together who have forestry land, and help them learn how to best manage their land. [More](#)



Indiana

The Northern Indiana Grazing Conference was held February 3-4 at the Michiana Event Center in Shipshewana, IN. Indiana AgrAbility Consultant Steve Etheridge staffed the AgrAbility booth both days. Total attendance for the two-day event was 2,545 with the vast majority of attendees being Amish.

Indiana AgrAbility staffed a display at the 2023 Indiana Small Farm Conference on March 2-3. This event serves as the annual educational and farmer-to-farmer networking event for the Indiana small and diversified farm community.

Maine

Boots-2-Bushels is now public in Maine! Find and follow it on [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#). Classes on crop planning and on small fruit production were attended by 30 participants.

As part of education outreach, the staff has provided AgrAbility 101 presentations to Vocational Rehabilitation offices throughout the state. VR counselors appreciate being reminded of the existence and value of AgrAbility for their agriculture clients.



Maine AgrAbility's OT student's proposal to formally evaluate the staff-developed "[Pain Tool](#)" has been approved and awarded a small grant to develop an awareness magnet. The student will be interviewing over 30 farmers throughout the state in April/May to validate and refine the utility of the newly developed method of rating pain.

Michigan

The Michigan AgrAbility staff is continuing to work with their farmers throughout the winter season and is assisting in preparing for the upcoming planting season. Staff are currently helping a farmer determine a solution for a truck lift transfer system.

Missouri

Missouri AgrAbility developed a media plan for Brain Injury Awareness Month in partnership with the Brain Injury Association of Missouri and updated the Brain Injury Awareness Month Promotional Toolkit which can be viewed [HERE](#).

Kathy Dothage with MU Extension and Susan Jaster with Lincoln University Innovative Small Farmers' Outreach Program were invited to present "Weathering the Storm in Agriculture: How to Cultivate a Productive Mindset" to 45 participants at the Missouri Dairy Expo in Springfield, MO, on February 20th. [More](#)

Missouri AgrAbility staff members and David Middleton, consultant farmer, exhibited at the annual Western Farm Show, February 23rd - February 25, 2023, in Kansas City, Missouri. The show attracted close to 500 exhibitors that showcased their products or services used in agribusiness, ranging from farm implements and livestock equipment to seed and feed, plus chemicals and computers. [More](#)



Missouri AgrAbility staff assisted with finalizing plans for the Armed to Farm Conference to be hosted in April. The National Center for Appropriate Technology (NCAT) has teamed 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. [More](#)

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



Five members of the LUCE ISFOP team attended the Missouri Blueberry School hosted by the University of Missouri in Springfield, MO, on February 24th.

February 24-26, members of the Lincoln University Innovative Small Farmers' Outreach Program (LUCE ISFOP) joined the University of

Missouri Extension at the Missouri Western Farm Show in Kansas City where they shared Missouri AgrAbility program information and resources with participants.

Missouri AgrAbility was a featured sponsor of the Brain Injury Association of Missouri (BIA-MO) Sports Concussions: Facts, Fallacies, and New Frontiers Seminars during February and early March. In addition, Missouri AgrAbility 4-H Save Your Brain Program was highlighted during the "Awareness for All: Teaching Others about Concussions" session at the four live Seminars. [More](#)

Nebraska

Cochran represented Nebraska AgrAbility at the 32nd Annual Buffalo

Bill Farm & Ranch Expo on February 1-2 in North Platte, Nebraska. The expo draws 1,500 to 1,800 people primarily from rural Nebraska. (Photo credit: [North Platte Telegraph](#)) [More](#)



Emily Jacobson represented Nebraska AgrAbility at the annual Women in Ag Conference, February 22-23, in Kearney, Nebraska. Over 300 attendees made it to the conference despite a severe winter storm impacting the area. [More](#)

University of Nebraska-Lincoln Extension hosted the 2023 Amplify Engagement Conference on campus with over 350 attendees. The conference provided an opportunity for the greater statewide University of Nebraska system to come together with faculty, staff, students, community stakeholders and partners to learn about key issues facing Nebraskans.

[More](#)



Four videos were recently added to the new Nebraska AgrAbility Channel on the University of Nebraska-Lincoln MediaHub. The videos highlight the success stories of Nebraska farmers working with Nebraska AgrAbility. [More](#)

New Mexico

New Mexico AgrAbility staff are collecting information about their victories for their Spring 2023 newsletter. They will announce publication when it is available.

The New Mexico AgrAbility Project (NMAP) CEU to inform community OTs/PTs of AgrAbility, NMTAP, and DVR resources for farmers has been approved by the rules and laws division! Team members are polishing the presentation material and will start delivering the content to rehabilitation professionals as soon as March/April as in-person or online presentations.

The New Mexico Technology Assistance Program (NMTAP) provided training to 19 OT students on February 14, in the broader categories of assistive technology with a special break-out for technology that will support farming, gardening, and ranching.

The next cohort of seven farming apprentices began on Wednesday March 1, for training in agricultural practices.

Three University of New Mexico rehab professional (OT) students have begun service-learning projects with NMAP partners to deepen their knowledge of resources and adaptations that can support farmers and ranchers.

North Carolina



NC AgrAbility staff exhibited at the Southern Farm Show in Raleigh from February 1-3. The event had over 400 exhibitors and is a "can't-miss" for farmers, allied professionals, and landscapers. [More](#)

The Gold Start Grower annual meeting February 2, in Raleigh, NC, was hosted by the Agriculture Safety and Health Bureau of the NC DOL, and it highlights growers who do their best to provide a good stay for migrant farmworkers. [More](#)

The Guilford County Cooperative Extension Community Garden Program hosted the Seeds to Share events in Greensboro (February 4) and in High Point (February 11). The event gathered many urban farmers and hobby gardeners, as well as groups supporting local foods and fighting food

deserts, who were exchanging seeds and knowledge. [More](#)

NC AgrAbility exhibited at the North Carolina Organic Growers School Feb. 25 -26. Two thousand people attended, and NC AgrAbility engaged 80 attendees for follow-up, farmer assistance, and potential partnerships.



NC AgrAbility is expanding its potential partnerships for ongoing assistance. On February 16, NC AgrAbility visited an Easterseals site in Zebulon where it will partner with the NC A&T community gardens specialist to assist residents with growing food.

Ohio

Advocacy. Education. Outreach. Ohio AgrAbility staff spent February presenting, advocating, educating across the state.



February 27 was Brain Injury Awareness and Advocacy Day at the Ohio Statehouse. Disability Services Coordinator Laura Akgerman represented Ohio AgrAbility and spoke to her state representative, Mary Lightbody, about Ohio AgrAbility, brain injury, and keeping Ohio farmers farming. [More](#)

In addition to advocacy at the statehouse, Laura had the opportunity to present "Gardening with Arthritis" at the Ohio Ecological Food and Farm Association conference, and the Columbus Home and Garden Show.

Randy Joseph, OAP rural rehabilitation supervisor, made a difference when he shared information about Track Chairs with staff from the Guernsey County Board of Developmental Disabilities.

"I need to give you a huge thank you for the connection you helped me make at McCabe Outdoors. [More](#)

Pennsylvania

In Pennsylvania - home of the weather-predicting groundhog Punxsutawney Phil who predicted six more weeks of winter on Feb. 2 - staff made their way around the state conducting farm visits, educating organizations and groups about farming with a disability, and exhibiting at outreach events to share the services and support available through AgrAbility PA.

Staffers Abbie Spackman (project assistant) and Linda Fetzer (project manager) were featured in two "Bovine Banter" podcasts through the Penn State University Extension Dairy Team. AgrAbility was highlighted in both podcasts.

Listen here: <https://extension.psu.edu/bovine-banter>



The same staffer duo, Abbie and Linda, provided interactive demonstrations and educational information at the Lebanon County Crop Conference, attended by over 200 production farmers. Demonstrations included low-tech AT items and seasonal AT such as heated gloves, gripping aids, and ice cleats. [More](#)

Staffer Kendra Martin (outreach coordinator) had her fill of all things dairy at the 2023 Pennsylvania Dairy Summit. The two-day event offered great opportunities to talk to dairy farmers and network with vendors. [More](#)



Kendra also attended the Pennsylvania Veteran Farming Network Conference on Feb. 25. The event for 50 Veterans actively pursuing farming in Pennsylvania featured information from AgrAbility PA, Rodale Institute, NRCS, and USDA.

To end the month, Abbie and Linda prepared outreach bags for a safety event for Amish families in Lancaster County on February 25. The bags included AgrAbility information, Plain Facts about Arthritis, low-tech AT handout, ag safety and health information, and PPE. Linda presented an animal safety session for the participants at the event.

South Carolina



Two of the Clemson staff from the South Carolina AgrAbility project, Dr. Dale Layfield and Audie Cherry, staffed an AgrAbility awareness booth at the Farmer Veteran Coalition Symposium on February 12 in Columbia, SC. Staff member Dr. Joshua Idassi from South Carolina State University also staffed a booth at the event. [More](#)

Tennessee

February means [Pick TN Conference](#) time, and TN AgrAbility had the opportunity to network with producers and agriculture industry representative during this three-day conference. A packed agenda provided many opportunities for producers to attend educational sessions focusing on fruits and vegetables, horticulture, beekeeping, Christmas tree production, and many other topics. [More](#)

During February, TN AgrAbility staff members attended three [Southern Ag Exchange Network](#) (SAGe) of TN farm stress in-services led by Dr. Heather Sedges, associate professor, human development specialist, and principal investigator for SAGe of Tennessee. [More](#)



At the conclusion of Grain Bin Safety Week, February 19 - 25, 77 participants were trained in the grain bin safety and rescue training program in Jackson, Tennessee. The West Tennessee Region 4 TN Association of Rescue Squads' semi-annual February meeting was the host for this training. [More](#)

TN AgrAbility staff presented at the Obion/Lake Farm School with 72 in attendance. The farm school was held during February for ag producers, featuring topics related to weed control, insect/disease control, variety selection, and marketing presented by University of Tennessee specialists.



Sad day in TN with the death of Chris Webb, one of TN AgrAbility's friends and farmers. Chris died on February 13. Chris was a beef cattle and hay farmer. [More](#)

Texas

Makenzie Thomas, Texas AgrAbility program coordinator, met with a rural health specialist from the Texas State Office of Rural Health to discuss collaboration between AgrAbility and the offices of rural health to better support farmers and ranchers with disabilities.

Texas AgrAbility hosted a webinar "Peer Support for Farmers & Ranchers with Disabilities" in collaboration with the Brazos Valley Center for Independent Living. Topics included benefits of peer support and how individuals with disabilities can connect to peer groups. The webinar recording can be viewed [HERE](#).

Makenzie Thomas, Cheryl Grenwelge, and Ellie Gandara-Castillo presented "Assistive Technology in the Agriculture Workplace" to 19 occupational therapy students at the University of St. Augustine. One student contacted AgrAbility after the presentation to

possibly collaborate on a capstone project.

Dr. Cheryl Grenwelge attended the Farm Ranch and Wildlife Expo in Abilene and provided a presentation on Texas AgrAbility to attendees. Over 800 individuals were in attendance at the event.

Texas AgrAbility produced a yearly impact brief to show accomplishments from 2022. The brief can be found [HERE](#).

Utah

The AgrAbility of Utah staff was excited to set up a booth and present at two crop schools sponsored by Utah State University Extension. The first was in Logan, Utah, on Feb. 14, and was attended by over 80 farmers and ranchers. The second school focused on corn production and was in Tremonton, Utah, on Feb. 16, and was attended by over 60 people from the area.

On Feb. 15, AgrAbility staff set up a display table and presented at the Northern Utah Fruit Growers Association meeting in Brigham City, Utah. The 30-plus attendees learned about fruit tree health, drip irrigation systems, blackberry and raspberry production, and other topics.

Program Coordinator Randall Bagley was interviewed on Utah Public Radio's All Access program on Feb. 21 and explained the benefits of AgrAbility. KUSU-UPR operates from Logan, Utah, and listenership covers northern Utah and southern Idaho.

AgrAbility staff presented at the Urban and Small Farms Conference on Feb. 23. The three-day online conference was attended by over 900 people and focused on many subjects including drought, micro farming, fruit and vegetable production, animal science, funding sources, etc.

On Feb. 25, AgrAbility staff set up a display table at Utah Beef Field Days in Logan, Utah, and were happy to visit with many of the 180 attendees from across the state. The two-day event included lectures, demonstrations, and tours of the Utah State University Farm and Forage Research Center.

Virginia

During the month of February, the Virginia AgrAbility team reached a new target audience by presenting at the Mount Rogers Community Service Board workshop. This event hosted approximately 30 individuals living with disabilities or injuries who are invested in agriculture. Additionally, the team participated in Virginia Cooperative Extension's Winter Conference and Virginia Farm Transitions Workshops.

Washington

The Washington AgrAbility team continued to immerse the state with AgrAbility resources and programming in February. The team continued to attend conferences and meetings all over the state providing outreach and education to 1000s of individuals.

Don attended the Skagit AG Summit on February 10th, and the Western Washington Seed Workshop on February 13th, sharing AgrAbility information at both events.

Emily presented on farm stress resources at the Central Klickitat Conservation District Annual Meeting in Goldendale on February 15th and shared information and materials on AgrAbility with the farmers and Grange members in attendance.

Emily presented and tabled at the Gorge Buyer Seller Matchmaker event in Hood River,

OR, on February 21st. Growers and local buyers (restaurants, bars, markets, etc.) gathered speed-dating style to connect over products grown in the Columbia River Gorge (includes three counties in OR and two in WA). The table display had AT items and educational AgrAbility materials.

Emily and Alyssa attended the Spokane Agricultural Expo on February 7th-9th, an annual event that brings thousands of farmers, ranchers, agricultural professionals, and youth to Spokane each year. They staffed a table for Washington AgrAbility and displayed a variety of AT items. The AgrAbility educational booklets were a hit at this event, and the AT items sparked countless conversations and demonstrations.

Emily presented on AgrAbility and farm stress resources at the Eastern Klickitat Conservation District annual meeting on February 28th in Bickleton.

Debbie met with several diverse groups this month to educate them on AgrAbility and share resources. She introduced AgrAbility to Wahkiakum County Extension, the Eagle Newspaper, and the Cowlitz Tribe.

Deb tabled at the Skagit County Cattlemen's Banquet on February 4th, and the FFA/4-H Market Animal Clinic for Whatcom, Skagit, Snohomish, San Juan, Island, and King Counties on February 5th & 6th.

Deb attended and tabled at the Skagit County Seed Growers Meeting on February 9th followed by the Tri County Pesticide Recertification Classes on February 14th & 15th. She demoed the PTO Quick Link System, which led to it being loaned out, and she now has a waiting list to try it out.

Deb also tabled at the Regional Potato Growers Workshop on February 24th where she displayed and demonstrated AT pieces from her lending library.

The conferences and meetings have been exceedingly effective in informing and educating Washington farmers and farm workers about AgrAbility and getting potential clients. The co-coordinators are currently working with several new clients, with interest increasing every day.

Wisconsin



On Saturday, January 14, Carl F Statz & Sons and AgrAbility of Wisconsin co-hosted a farm resources open house. Held at Carl F. Statz in Waunakee, WI, the day focused on resources. Dan Bauer, program supervisor, presented on the valuable programs and services offered by the Department of Agriculture and Trade and Consumer Protection's Wisconsin Farm Center,... [More](#)

International AgrAbility Network News

AgrAbility for Africa

The AgrAbility for Africa staff has run a survey to assess the state of disability funding and support systems across Africa. The data will be used to help advocate for improvement of health, education, and employment benefits for people and children with disabilities in rural Africa. [More](#)

AgrAbility for Africa staff members were invited to a consultative meeting in the Uganda Ministry of Health to participate in the government efforts to improve rehabilitation care and access in

Uganda. The staff were happy to contribute to the discussion.
[More](#)



Staff Changes and Recognition

Colorado



Ellis Vidmar, M.S., joined the Colorado AgrAbility team in January as the program coordinator! Ellis' agriculture roots are from a multi-generational cow/calf ranch in Hot Sulphur Springs, Colorado. She spent most of her summers raising market animals in 4-H, rodeoing, and helping with daily ranch operations. [More](#)

Missouri

Please welcome Lynn Winterberg who joined the Brain Injury Association of Missouri as program associate on February 9, 2023. Lynn has more than 25 years of experience working with individuals with disabilities. Her experience includes connecting individuals with resources and employment services.

Nebraska

Cheers to 21 years! Rod Peterson Retires - Nebraska AgrAbility hosted a card shower and coffee for Rod Peterson. Rod retired after 21 years of service to Nebraska AgrAbility and Easterseals. Thank you, Rod!

AgrAbility in the News

Click titles below for news stories featuring AgrAbility projects .

- [AgrAbility PA: Farming with a Disability](#) - Scroll down to: "PCN TV 2 19 2023". (AgrAbility for Pennsylvanians)
- [AgrAbility workshop focuses on everyday challenges for producers](#) (Colorado AgrAbility Project)
- [Working together and making it work](#) (Nebraska AgrAbility)

Other News

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

- [Talking Total Farmer Health Podcast](#)
Women for the Land from American Farmland Trust
Episode 17 • 22nd February 2023 • AgriSafe Talking Total Farmer Health • AgriSafe
Women in Agriculture
Episode 18 • 1st March 2023 • AgriSafe Talking Total Farmer Health • AgriSafe
In this episode you will hear from three women who work in agriculture - Jessica Groskopf, a Nebraska extension agent, Carey Portell, our host, and Linda Emanuel, AgriSafe's Community Health Director. Listen and you will learn about

some of the fantastic programs offered by the Nebraska Women in Agriculture program, find out about the changing role of women working in agriculture, hear about risks that female ag producers encounter, and learn about some changes we will be making to our podcast!

- [Unique wheelchair allows Tyrone man with cerebral palsy to farm](#)
- [USDA: Next steps addressing discriminated borrowers](#)
- [Cotton grower loses eyesight, but not his vision for farming](#)
- [Farmer Veteran Coalition releases second episode with Vets in Ag Podcast](#)
- [Prescription Required for Livestock Antibiotics Beginning June 2023](#)
- [Annie's Project celebrates 20 years of empowering women in agriculture](#)
- [Can you grow it profitably?](#)
- [DAIRY BRINGS RESILIENCE FOR UKRAINE FARMER](#)
- [Basketball, Agriculture Forever Connected](#)

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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March 2023

National AgrAbility Project



Mid-February is time for the National Farm Machinery Show at the Kentucky State Fairgrounds in Louisville, Kentucky. The show covers eight interconnected exhibit halls totaling more than 1.2 million square feet of indoor exhibit space and houses more than 900 exhibitors. Randy Joseph from Ohio AgrAbility and the National AgrAbility staff met with attendees at the display which included AgrAbility brochures, arthritis materials, veteran outreach materials, Indiana AgVet information, the LifeLyfts by Life Essentials John Deere tractor and lift, Gearing Up for Safety materials, and examples and materials from VisionWorks Camera Systems.

Submitted by Steve Swain

March 2023

Alaska

The Alaska AgrAbility (AKAgrAbility) team have been planning for spring workshops and assessments as Alaska sees daylight increasing. DeShana York has been working to plan workshops with the Alaska Veterans Affairs Health Care Division and the Anchorage Domiciliary Care for Homeless Veterans Program. The Anchorage Domiciliary is a residential public rehab program specializing in the treatment of alcoholism, opioid addiction, substance abuse, and dual diagnosis. They have expanded their programming at the facility around growing and have accessible raised beds and have recently acquired a greenhouse they are planning to have operational this summer.

On March 4th, AKAgrAbility program information was provided at a vendor fair in conjunction with the 51st Delta Farm Forum in Delta Junction, Alaska. This is a well-attended annual event that is coordinated by the Delta Junction District Office of UAF Cooperative Extension Service and the Salcha-Delta Soil & Water Conservation District. The forum is a community event combined with an update on local agricultural information. Producers, researchers, and representatives from businesses and agricultural agencies gave presentations. One of the highlights from this year's forum was when Claire Friedrichsen, research soil scientist, USDA ARS, Northern Great Plains Research Laboratory, provided a presentation titled "Wellbeing from Working the Land."

Submitted by DeShana York

March 2023

Colorado

The Colorado AgrAbility Team is expanding! The Colorado AgrAbility Project in the Department of Human Development and Family Studies and Colorado State University Extension (CSUE) are looking to hire four full-time regional extension behavioral health specialists to provide in-the-field stress management information and education to farmers and ranchers to prevent emergencies, including suicide, to be innovative in addressing the reluctance of many farmers and ranchers to seek and follow through with counseling, and to provide training for rural behavioral health providers and community stakeholders. Posting closes March 20, 2023.

Those interested can apply here: <https://jobs.colostate.edu/postings/121492>
For questions or more information, please contact: Chad Reznicek, Behavioral Health Specialist, Colorado AgrAbility Project at Chad.Reznicek@colostate.edu.

Submitted by Ellis Vidmar

Staff Changes and Recognition



Ellis Vidmar, M.S., joined the Colorado AgrAbility team in January as the program coordinator! Ellis' agriculture roots are from a multi-generational cow/calf ranch in Hot Sulphur Springs, Colorado. She spent most of her summers raising market animals in 4-H, rodeoing, and helping with daily ranch operations. Ellis' passion for agriculture started at a young age and it led her to seek further education to advocate for the industry. Ellis started her college career at Northeastern Junior College in Sterling, and found her voice for agriculture advocacy. She received her Bachelor of Science in agricultural media and communication at West Texas A&M University in Canyon, TX. Post-graduation, she and her husband moved back to Colorado for almost a year before she decided to pursue her master's degree. During graduate school, she worked in the Paul Engler College of Agriculture and Natural Sciences dean's office at West Texas A&M University for two and a half years while completing research, writing her thesis, teaching undergraduate classes, and most of all growing professionally. August of 2022 she graduated and moved back to Colorado to pursue advocating for the industry. Ellis is thrilled to be serving on the AgrAbility team and making a real difference in agricultural producer's lives.

March 2023

Florida

On February 22nd, Florida AgrAbility held its first meeting with the program's key partners. This meeting allowed all partners to meet, mingle, and educate each other about their programs as well as their role in connecting with Florida AgrAbility. The FAP gave a presentation that provided its partners with a deeper understanding of AgrAbility and its role in serving farmers, current client load, future goals, and how they hope and intend to work with all partners.

Submitted by Cassandra Ward

March 2023

Georgia

On February 9th, Georgia AgrAbility had a great time doing a virtual meet-and-greet with South Carolina AgrAbility! Staff are so excited for South Carolina to have an AgrAbility program. The Georgia staff was able to share a few tips with them that they have learned over the years. Best of luck to the South Carolina team, as they are now part of the AgrAbility family!



On February 18th, the Meet at the Shed Initiative hosted an introductory wood carving workshop for men in a rural Georgia community. The Men's Shed is a creative approach to address mental health for older men. Through shared activities, they form friendships and build support networks. The wood carving event filled up quickly and the men enjoyed learning a new skill. While they were carving

the men had a great time fellowshiping with each other, and they reported that this was one of the highlights of the event. This initiative is aimed at reducing stress in rural communities. The participants are looking forward to more events in the near future.



The Warren/Glascock County Extension coordinator invited AgrAbility Staff to attend a Cattlemen's Association meeting and present on assistive work technology that AgrAbility can provide or help to provide. Staff members presented on the topic and connected with association members following the meeting. The connections made during the meeting resulted in three new clients and a positive outreach opportunity.

AgrAbility staff members attended the 2023 Georgia Organics Conference and Expo in Perry, Georgia. The event was held February 16-18 with presentations on the 16th and 17th followed by farm tours on Saturday the 18th. The event took place after a two-year hiatus and drew the attention of almost 500 participants. Staff were able to connect with several agriculture professionals and expand the awareness of the AgrAbility Project and its capabilities.



GA AgrAbility staff attended the Land and Ladies Woman Landowner Symposium located in Brunswick, GA, on February 23rd and 24th. The purpose of the event was to bring women together who have forestry land, and help them learn how to best manage their land. There were fun activities including an ax throwing event and chainsaw hands-on safety training. AgrAbility staff members attended the conference and connected with many of the speakers and conference participants. The staff shared information about AgrAbility and enlightened landowners to opportunities the project can provide to farmers.



Submitted by AgrAbility in Georgia

March 2023

Missouri

Kathy Dothage with MU Extension and Susan Jaster with Lincoln University Innovative Small Farmers' Outreach Program were invited to present "Weathering the Storm in Agriculture: How to Cultivate a Productive Mindset" to 45 participants at the Missouri Dairy Expo in Springfield, MO, on February 20th. Informational packets about rural mental programs and behavioral health services, Missouri AgrAbility, Missouri's accessible beekeeping, and Heroes to Hives were sent home with each participant.

Missouri AgrAbility staff members and David Middleton, consultant farmer, exhibited at the annual Western Farm Show, February 23rd - February 25, 2023, in Kansas City, Missouri. The show attracted close to 500 exhibitors that showcased their products or services used in agribusiness, ranging from farm implements and livestock equipment to seed and feed, plus chemicals and computers. There's was a lot to see for full-time, traditional farmers as well as compact tractors and equipment for small, beginning, and part-time lifestyle farmers. Also, the Family Living Center featured a wide assortment of items for use in and around the farm and home while the health & safety area provided hands-on agricultural safety and health displays including the Missouri AgrAbility ergonomic glove display.



Missouri AgrAbility staff assisted with finalizing plans for the Armed to Farm Conference to be hosted in April. The National Center for Appropriate Technology (NCAT) has teamed 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 will be for veterans in the Midwest, with preference given to those in Missouri. Armed to Farm will take place April 10-14 in Columbia, Missouri. Information found about Armed to Farm is located at <https://www.armedtofarm.org/>.

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

Submitted by Karen Funkenbusch and Tevin Uthlaut

Missouri AgrAbility was a featured sponsor of the Brain Injury Association of Missouri (BIA-MO) Sports Concussions: Facts, Fallacies, and New Frontiers Seminars during February and early March. In addition, Missouri AgrAbility 4-H Save Your Brain Program was highlighted during the "Awareness for All: Teaching Others about Concussions" session at the four live Seminars. Emily Doosing, field specialist with University of Missouri 4-H Youth Development, and Maureen Cunningham with the Brain Injury Association of Missouri were co-creators and presenters of the "Awareness for All" session.

Submitted by Maureen Cunningham

March 2023

Nebraska

Cochran represented Nebraska AgrAbility at the 32nd Annual Buffalo Bill Farm & Ranch Expo on February 1-2 in North Platte, Nebraska. The expo draws 1,500 to 1,800 people primarily from rural Nebraska. Soni said the AgrAbility booth increased awareness about the program and gave people with disabilities the opportunity to share their personal stories of life on a farm or ranch. Many people stopped by to pick up resources on preventing injuries and the Nebraska AgrAbility business cards to share with family and friends. (Photo credit: [North Platte Telegraph](#))



Emily Jacobson represented Nebraska AgrAbility at the annual Women in Ag Conference, February 22-23, in Kearney, Nebraska. Over 300 attendees made it to the conference despite a severe winter storm impacting the area. This annual event focuses on educating and uplifting women involved in every aspect of Nebraska's agricultural industry. The conference focuses on five areas of risk: production risk, market risk, financial risk, legal risk, and human risk. Emily shared that the keynote speaker touched on the importance of valuing women's role in the ag field and roles as wife, mother, coworker, farm hand, and so much more. Emily also reported that the Nebraska AgrAbility booth had terrific outreach and that the information on arthritis was a hit!

University of Nebraska-Lincoln Extension hosted the 2023 Amplify Engagement Conference on campus with over 350 attendees. The conference provided an opportunity for the greater statewide University of Nebraska system to come together with faculty, staff, students, community stakeholders and partners to learn about key issues facing Nebraskans. Aaron Yoder shared Nebraska AgrAbility as part of his presentation during the conference event "Engaging the State and the Campus Networking" at the Nebraska State Museum.



Four videos were recently added to the new Nebraska AgrAbility Channel on the University of Nebraska-Lincoln MediaHub. The videos highlight the success stories of Nebraska farmers working with Nebraska AgrAbility. UNL MediaHub provides closed captioning and transcription services to foster accessibility standards for all media. Videos can be viewed at <https://mediahub.unl.edu/channels/43474>.

Submitted by Soni Cochran

March 2023

North Carolina



NC AgrAbility staff exhibited at the Southern Farm Show in Raleigh from February 1-3. The event had over 400 exhibitors and is a "can't-miss" for farmers, allied professionals, and landscapers. It is the largest agricultural exposition in the Carolinas and Virginia. NC AgrAbility staff provided informational materials and had the chance to offer direct services to several of the attendees. Eleven people signed on to the NC AgrAbility listserv.

The Gold Start Grower annual meeting February 2, in Raleigh, NC, was hosted by the Agriculture Safety and Health Bureau of the NC DOL, and it highlights growers who do their best to provide a good stay for migrant farmworkers. NC AgrAbility and several other programs that serve the needs of farmworkers were invited as exhibitors to provide more information to the 137 growers that attended the meeting. NC AgrAbility was able to interact with many growers and obtained a referral for direct services.

The Guildford County Cooperative Extension Community Garden Program hosted the Seeds to Share events in Greensboro (February 4) and in High Point (February 11). The event gathered many urban farmers and hobby gardeners, as well as groups supporting local foods and fighting food deserts, who were exchanging seeds and knowledge. NC AgrAbility was invited to promote safety in farming and gardening among exhibitors and participants. The event was attended by 170 participants who had the chance to try tools, ask questions, and receive educational materials. Twenty-three signed up to be added to the NC AgrAbility listserv.



Submitted by Beatriz (Betty) Rodriguez

March 2023

Ohio



February 27 was Brain Injury Awareness and Advocacy Day at the Ohio Statehouse. Disability Services Coordinator Laura Akgerman represented Ohio AgrAbility and spoke to her state representative, Mary Lightbody, about Ohio AgrAbility, brain injury, and keeping Ohio farmers farming. Representative Lightbody is a farmer, serves on the Ohio House Agriculture Committee, and was very engaged in learning more about Ohio AgrAbility services, outreach, and collaboration with Ohio's vocational rehabilitation agency, Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities.

Randy Joseph, OAP rural rehabilitation supervisor, made a difference when he shared information about Track Chairs with staff from the Guernsey County Board of Developmental Disabilities.

"I need to give you a huge thank you for the connection you helped me make at McCabe Outdoors. I made contact with the owner Kim McCabe and she is very nice and really wants to help the child I work with get a Track Chair. She has a sit-to-stand Track Chair that has been donated back to them. She is giving the chair all new components, seat, and paint job so it will essentially be brand new. My girl even gets to pick the paint color. This is a \$20,000 chair brand new and even better than what we were trying to get. They are willing to meet the \$10,000 budget and have applied to become a waiver provider so they can work with me to get this kid what she needs. This totally made my day and her dad nearly cried when I got to share the information with him. THANKS!!!! your discussion with me made a difference. Misty"

Submitted by Laura Akgerman

March 2023

Pennsylvania



The same staffer duo, Abbie and Linda, provided interactive demonstrations and educational information at the Lebanon County Crop Conference, attended by over 200 production farmers. Demonstrations included low-tech AT items and seasonal AT such as heated gloves, gripping aids, and ice cleats. Ag safety and health information, high-visibility clothing, and educational information on blind spots were also part of the

team display.

Staffer Kendra Martin (outreach coordinator) had her fill of all things dairy at the 2023 Pennsylvania Dairy Summit. The two-day event offered great opportunities to talk to dairy farmers and network with vendors. Kendra was interviewed by radio and TV personality Dave Williams with American Farm Country Radio, PA Farm Country Radio, and the National Association of Farm Broadcasters. The interview aired in conjunction with AgrAbility PA's anthemic video on Feb. 19's Pennsylvania Country Roads show on the Pennsylvania Cable Network.

Learn more: <https://pafarmcountryradio.com/index.html>



Submitted by Kendra Martin

March 2023

South Carolina



Two of the Clemson staff from the South Carolina AgrAbility project, Dr. Dale Layfield and Audie Cherry, staffed an AgrAbility awareness booth at the Farmer Veteran Coalition Symposium on February 12 in Columbia, SC. Staff member Dr. Joshua Idassi from South Carolina State University also staffed a booth at the event. One of SC AgrAbility's advisory committee

members and current president of the SC Farmer Veteran Coalition, Matt Rutter, and his wife, Kara, coordinated the meeting with nearly 100 in attendance. Among those in attendance was Jeanette Lombardo, the national Farmer Veteran Coalition executive director. Jeanette is also a member of the National AgrAbility Project advisory team.



Submitted by South Carolina AgrAbility

March 2023

Tennessee

February means [Pick TN Conference](#) time, and TN AgrAbility had the opportunity to network with producers and agriculture industry representative during this three-day conference. A packed agenda provided many opportunities for producers to attend educational sessions focusing on fruits and vegetables, horticulture, beekeeping, Christmas tree production, and many other topics. This conference is conducted by eight different agriculture organizations/associations in Tennessee. TN AgrAbility helped to plan the Farmer Veteran Coalition of TN annual meeting at the event. The meeting was well attended with approximately 40 members and others attending virtually.

During February, TN AgrAbility staff members attended three [Southern Ag Exchange Network](#) (SAGe) of TN farm stress in-services led by Dr. Heather Sedges, associate professor, human development specialist, and principal investigator for SAGe of Tennessee. Twenty counties will develop strategies to share farm stress awareness resources and plan farmer appreciation events.



At the conclusion of Grain Bin Safety Week, February 19 - 25, 77 participants were trained in the grain bin safety and rescue training program in Jackson, Tennessee. The West Tennessee Region 4 TN Association of Rescue Squads' semi-annual February meeting was the host for this training. A special thanks to Verell Farms and Couch Farms for supplying the grain and trailers for the training and to all those who attended.

The training was coordinated by TN AgrAbility and TN Association of Rescue Squads. The morning session consisted of classroom instruction related to safety, grain bin entrapment prevention and rescue equipment. The afternoon session was hands-on; experiencing walking on grain, using harnesses, and using rescue tubes. TN AgrAbility uses these trainings to help emphasize the need to reduce secondary injuries for farmers.

Sad day in TN with the death of Chris Webb, one of TN AgrAbility's friends and farmers. Chris died on February 13. Chris was a beef cattle and hay farmer. He graduated from the University of Tennessee Knoxville in 1989 with a degree in Ag business and used it to manage his farming operation. After a life changing car accident on July 30, 2000, Chris farmed with a C-5 incomplete spinal cord injury. Bill Begley and TN AgrAbility helped him gain access to his tractors safely. A Life Essentials platform lift was mounted on his tractor to get Chris back in the tractor and hay fields. TN AgrAbility and GA Farm Again had planned to add hand controls soon since he needed some new tractor modifications. When Chris was first injured, he told the doctor he did not want to go on disability and that he could still work; and Chris worked hard to maintain his independence. His attitude eliminated barriers. He will be missed!

Submitted by Tennessee AgrAbility Project

March 2023

Wisconsin



On Saturday, January 14, Carl F Statz & Sons and AgrAbility of Wisconsin co-hosted a farm resources open house. Held at Carl F. Statz in Waunakee, WI, the day focused on resources. Dan Bauer, program supervisor, presented on the valuable programs and services offered by the Department of Agriculture and Trade and Consumer Protection's Wisconsin

Farm Center, which include financial & business consulting, succession & transition planning, herd-based diagnostics, veteran farmer assistance, farmer wellness, and conflict mediation. Andrea Klahn, outreach specialist, spoke about the AgrAbility program, and there was a table with safety information.



Pam Jahnke, Wisconsin's "Fabulous Farm Babe" and farm director of the Midwest Farm Report Network, MCed the event. Congrats to Miranda, winner of the drawing for two tickets to see Reba McEntire in Milwaukee on March 17.

Submitted by Andrea Klahn

March 2023

AgrAbility for Africa

The AgrAbility for Africa staff has run a survey to assess the state of disability funding and support systems across Africa. The data will be used to help advocate for improvement of health, education, and employment benefits for people and children with disabilities in rural Africa.

The survey ran between March 8th and 14th, 2023. Findings from the assessment will be presented at the forthcoming AgrAbility National Training Workshop taking place in Spokane, Washington, between March 20-23 .

The assessment is two-phased: Part 1 was online, and Part 2 will be in-person. The in-person survey phase is meant to enhance inclusiveness of results, as AgrAbility for Africa believes it is important to include everyone in the conversation, even persons with disabilities with no access to digital technologies. Support is welcome to enable the implementation of Part 2 of the survey.

Everyone is welcome to meet the AgrAbility for Africa team in Spokane, Washington, to find out more details on how to support an inclusive African disability policy agenda.

AgrAbility for Africa staff members were invited to a consultative meeting in the Uganda Ministry of Health to participate in the government efforts to improve rehabilitation care and access in Uganda. The staff were happy to contribute to the discussion. The team shared with the stakeholders the national rehabilitation gaps and opportunities, and hope their contribution will be of great value and will positively contribute to the achievement of the 2024 -2030 strategic mission of having universal rehabilitation care access for all persons in Uganda.



Submitted by Mutumba Faisal

March 2023

Upcoming Events

- Name** New Battleground to Breaking Ground Phase 1 Course
Dates Rolling admission
City, State Online
Contact Info/Web link <https://agrillifelearn.tamu.edu/s/product/new-phase-1-battleground-to-breaking-ground/01t4x000002ciNKAAY>
- Name** QPR for Farmers and Farm Families
Dates March 16, 2022, from 1:00 - 2:30 p.m. ET
City, State AgriSafe Webinar Online
Contact Info/Web link <https://www.agrisafe.org/event/qpr-for-farmers-and-farm-families-15/>
- Name** AgrAbility National Training Workshop
Dates March 20-23, 2023
City, State Spokane, Washington
Contact Info/Web link <http://www.agrability.org/agrability-national-training-workshop/2023-agrability-national-training-workshop/>
- Name** A Bird's Eye View of Avian Influenza
Dates March 23, 2023
City, State AgriSafe Webinar Online
Contact Info/Web link https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_tZThL6iuTpSes16QmY30qQ
- Name** Marketing Your Farm
Dates March 29, 2023, 12:00 - 1:00 p.m. ET
City, State Webinar Online
Contact Info/Web link <https://tinyurl.com/mv5t3zf6>
- Name** Zoonotic Disease and Pregnancy: A Deeper Dive
Dates March 29, 2023, 1:00 - 2:00 p.m. ET
City, State AgriSafe Webinar Online
Contact <https://tinyurl.com/3n7z57yj>

**Info/Web
link**

Name Talking About Ticks: Lyme Disease
Dates April 5, 2023, 1:00 - 2:00 p.m. Eastern Time

City, State AgriSafe Webinar Online

Contact <https://tinyurl.com/bd3vravy>
**Info/Web
link**

Name Armed to Farm Conference
Dates April 10-14, 2023

City, State Columbia, Missouri

Contact <https://www.armedtofarm.org/>
**Info/Web
link**

Name National 4-H Conference
Dates April 14-19, 2023

City, State Arlington, Virginia

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

Name Horse Progress Days
Dates June 30 - July 1, 2023

City, State Shipshewana, Indiana

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

Name 2023 agrileadHER virtual conference
Dates November 1-2, 2023

City, State Virtual Event Online

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