

AgrAbility e•Note

April 2023

A monthly update for AgrAbility projects and friends of AgrAbility

National AgrAbility Project News

AgrAbility all-staff virtual meeting: Monday, April 24, 3:00 p.m. EDT. Check your email later this week for an agenda and Zoom information.

The NTW was a great success! It was wonderful to be in-person once again. Just over 240 people attended the NTW in Spokane, WA. There were many great sessions, discussions, meals, and networking that took place. NAP was able to raise about \$7,500 through the silent and live auctions, the basket raffles, and the 50/50. Thank you to all those that donated and made bids on items. Thank you also to all those who helped plan and execute the NTW. Staff are looking forward to planning the 2024 NTW that will be hosted in Georgia. Anyone interested in being on the planning committee for 2024, please contact Tess McKeel tmckeel@goodwillfingerlakes.org - 585.447.9015 or JoBeth Rath jbrath@goodwillfingerlakes.org - 585.402.2059.



The next AgrAbility regional workshop will be held at the Hilton Garden Inn Indianapolis Airport, June 6-8, 2023. This workshop will focus on veterans in farming and programs to support them. Registration is now open! Visit the NAP website under [Training & Events](#) for details and the registration link.

The National AgrAbility Project would love to host a regional workshop with you. Anyone interested, please contact Tess tmckeel@goodwillfingerlakes.org or JoBeth jbrath@goodwillfingerlakes.org, for more information.



Kimber Nicoletti-Martínez, NAP farmworker outreach coordinator, gave a presentation and staffed a display at the 35th Annual East Coast Migrant Stream Forum in Orlando, FL, on April 5-7. Kimber is also scheduled to present and staff a display at the Midwest Stream Forum on April 24-26.

The next AgrAbility/North Central FRSAN webinar is tentatively scheduled for May 17 at 3:00 p.m. EDT with a focus on Native American stress issues. Details and registration information is scheduled to be sent next week.

NAP partner AgriSafe's own Carey Portell attended AgrAbility's National Training Workshop, where she educated attendees on how to keep farmers safe and on QPR specific to farmers and farm families.



Toolbox Spotlight



The [Liftiboi Off-Road Vehicle Transfer Lift](#) is designed primarily for wheelchair users who need help accessing the driver's seat of their ATV, UTV, or other off-road vehicle. Available as a kit for personal or professional-mechanic installation, the Liftboi has a reported lift capacity of 400 pounds.

State and Regional AgrAbility Project News

Alaska

The bulk of the Alaska AgrAbility team attended the annual National Training Workshop March 22-23 in Spokane, WA. Those from the Alaska team that attended were Art Nash, Debu Misra, Alda Norris, and Peg Schaffhauser. [More](#)

DeShana York shared AgrAbility resources at the Alaska statewide Master Gardeners Conference on April 8 in Anchorage, Alaska. There were approximately 145 attendees who attended the full day of workshops and a vendor fair.

Colorado

The Colorado AgrAbility Project had a very successful 2023 Winter Workshop series! Candiss Leathers, project manager, and Jim Craig, rural rehabilitation specialist, focused on ergonomic impacts and demonstrated how to make changes to daily tasks on the farm or ranch. [More](#)



Florida

Florida AgrAbility attended the 6th Annual Emergency Preparedness Expo on March 7th, 2023. AgrAbility had a booth to share outreach materials among the participants. [More](#)

The Florida AgrAbility director and case coordinator also attended the National Training Workshop in Spokane, WA, from March 20th-23rd. The event was an excellent opportunity to learn and network with other states with active AgrAbility projects.

Florida AgrAbility also organized a webinar to introduce the Florida AgrAbility Project to the University of Florida Extension faculty. Project staff continue engaging with clientele and conducting worksite assessments. [More](#)

Florida AgrAbility evaluation efforts progressed in the form of receiving approval to move forward with conducting key informant (stakeholder) interviews with individuals from partner AgrAbility centers.

Georgia



Mental Health First Aid full-day trainings were taught to 68 Young Farmer teachers across the state of Georgia. This effort was in conjunction with Southern Region Farm and Ranch Stress Assistance Network. [More](#)

Staff provided 13 new Georgia county agents a 30-minute presentation on agricultural equipment safety resources for youth safety training. Staff also provided useful information on agricultural accident demographics, useful safety tips, and how AgrAbility can serve their counties.



On March 11th, the Meet at the Shed initiative hosted a second wood carving workshop for men in a rural Georgia community. While they were carving, the participants had a great time fellowshiping with each other. This initiative is aimed at reducing stress in rural communities.

Georgia AgrAbility staff met with the Department of Veterans Affairs' community engagement and partnership teams along with local community leaders to create community coalitions with the purpose of establishing a resource rich, self-sustaining community support system for individuals in crisis throughout the southern Georgia counties of Decatur, Lowndes, Grady, Colquitt, and Thomas. [More](#)

Staff had a great time getting to connect with other states at the NTW. They all learned so much and came away energized to serve farmers. Thanks to Washington AgrAbility for hosting a great conference and setting the bar so high for a fun NTW!



Georgia AgrAbility is excited to host the 2024 AgrAbility National Training Workshop! The staff hopes to see all of you there next year!

Georgia AgrAbility staff attended the 2023 Farm Stress Summit and sat on a panel discussion highlighting resources for farmers and ranchers experiencing excessive stress. The event was hosted at Mercer University in Macon, Georgia. There were over 125 audience members for the panel discussion.

Georgia AgrAbility staff attended Ag Awareness Day at Irwin County Schools. Staff demonstrated ag safety to students.



Indiana



Indiana AgrAbility exhibited at the recent Indiana Small Farms Conference in Danville, Indiana. The Small Farms Conference, organized and hosted by Purdue Extension's Diversified Farming and Food Systems Team, provides educational and networking opportunities for those involved in small-scale, specialty, value-added, and urban agriculture. [More](#)

Maine

Staff participated in the Hall of Flags event at the Maine State Capitol to bring awareness of Maine AgrAbility and Boots-2-Bushels to state

legislators. Staff also had an engaging conversation with Governor Mills about the Boots-2-Bushels programming in particular.



Three staff members, two advisory council members, and one farmer client attended the National Training Workshop in Spokane. Major takeaways the team is committed to working on are sustainability and additional funding for client resources, helping clients with brain injuries, and developing a closer connection with veterans in other state projects.

Boots-2-Bushels held its first in-person on-farm visit at a plant nursery located in Damariscotta, Maine. Sixteen participants learned tips and tricks for starting seedlings for small-scale farm production.



Staff provided ergonomic and safety instruction to ten logger students of the Professional Logging Contractors of Maine safety school.

Michigan

Michigan AgrAbility staff presented and manned a display booth at the Michigan Beekeepers Association on March 11 in conjunction with Dr. Adam Ingrao, founder of Heroes to Hives. Staff taught about setting up accessible apiaries and assistive technology for beekeeping.



Missouri

Missouri AgrAbility hosted a successful March Brain Injury Awareness Month in partnership with the Brain Injury Association of Missouri. The 2023 Brain Injury Awareness Month Promotional Toolkit, social media posts, and videoclips, all experienced a significant increase in engagements.

March 25, Missouri AgrAbility exhibited during the 99th Annual Jefferson County Agricultural Conference in Hillsboro, Missouri. Attendees tried out ergonomic small hand tools and picked up AgrAbility education-based resources, farm safety booklets, and prevention of secondary injury materials. [More](#)



Missouri AgrAbility sent 12 delegates to the 2023 AgrAbility National Training Workshop in Spokane, Washington. Participants included the University of Missouri Extension, 4-H, Lincoln University Missouri Innovative Small Farmers' Outreach Program (ISFOP), Brain Injury Association of Missouri, a Missouri AgrAbility client farmer, and four veteran farmers. [More](#)

Elizabeth Picking, Susan Jaster, David Middleton, Willard Downs, and Karen Funkenbusch facilitated eight authorized fees for service (DESE DVR, & DHSS Rehab Services for the Blind) on the farm assessments with final report, pictures, videoclips, and quotes.

Four Lincoln University Missouri (ISFOP) team members accompanied staff from the University of Missouri Extension, Brain Injury Association of Missouri, and disabled and veteran farmers to attend the annual AgrAbility National Training Workshop in Spokane, WA.

Lincoln University ISFOP team hosted a "train the trainer" event in

St. Louis, MO, on Saturday, March 18th, for minority urban farmers, providing information on soil composition, seed starting, transplant planting, and growing mushrooms to 85 participants. Urban farmers were also provided with Missouri AgrAbility, mental health, and suicide prevention resources.



The University of Missouri Extension hosted the 99th Jefferson County Ag Conference on Saturday, March 25th, providing information to community partners and regional small farmers. Lincoln University ISFOP outreach worker Mary Bolling gave a presentation on ergonomics on the farm and provided AgrAbility programming information to 35 participants.

Missouri AgrAbility partnered with the Brain Injury Association of Missouri (BIA-MO) for the Brain Injury Fact of the Day social media campaign during March 2023, which is Brain Injury Awareness Month. A unique brain injury-related fact was posted each day on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram, as well as agriculture, health, veteran, and other websites. [More](#)

Dr. Brent Masel, medical director for the Brain Injury Association of America (BIAA), was a featured speaker for the "Brain Injury: Chronic Health Condition, Management and Prevention" session at the AgrAbility NTW. Attendees learned that brain injury is not an event or the final outcome, but rather it is the beginning of a disease process. [More](#)

Nebraska



On March 29-30, around 6,000 Nebraska FFA members, advisors, and guests participated in the annual Nebraska State FFA Convention. Held in Lincoln, Nebraska, participants took part in numerous general sessions, competitive events, workshops focused on leadership, a career fair, and educational tours. [More](#)

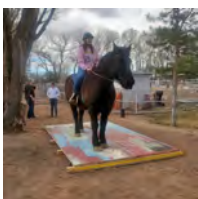
Emily Jacobson and John Davis have been busy working on client visits. They are learning new tools that could potentially help clients. Emily shares that they are trying to find a resource to help a Nebraska farmer with low vision see the ear tags on cattle.

In preparation for the Nebraska Advisory Council meeting on April 5 in Kearney, Nebraska, the team developed resources, sent invitations, and organized a plan for the day. Emily said she hoped to have a great crowd at the in-person event. A virtual connection to the daylong meeting was also available.

Nebraska AgrAbility team members attending the NTW included Angie Howell, Aaron Yoder, Emily Jacobson, Nancy Frecks, and Soni Cochran. Past Nebraska AgrAbility teammate and current Nebraska AgrAbility Advisory Council member Susan Harris also attended. [More](#)



New Mexico



University of New Mexico (UNM) occupational therapy service-learning students Brandy Runningwolf and Noah Monagle have been partnering with Mandy's farm to promote engagement of people with disabilities with gardening/accessible pathways and with hippotherapy/sensory tracks.

New Mexico AgrAbility Project (NMAP) is working with the [New Mexico Farm & Ranch Heritage Museum](#) in Las Cruces in April to plan an adaptive farming exhibit. This may include an adapted demonstration garden and a display of different adaptive tools. The farming and ranching museum in Las Cruces is listed as a top attraction in southern New Mexico.

Several NMAP team members attended the AgrAbility National Training Workshop (NTW) in Spokane, Washington, and are both inspired and thrilled to implement their new learning.

UNM OT faculty and students will present two posters at the AOTA 2023 Inspire conference highlighting the AgrAbility program in New Mexico (Pictures in April!)

On 3/16, NMAP presented at the first community farm visit to North Valley Organics, where staff pruned and dug blackberry cuttings for transplant.



Also on 3/16, Central New Mexico Community College held a showcase event highlighting the incredible electrical work they've done to run a dedicated service line to the NMAP new irrigation well.

On 3/29 and 4/4, NMAP Presented to the School to Work Transition Team in the southwest region of New Mexico on the AgrAbility apprenticeship program.

North Carolina



From March 20-23, NC AgrAbility participated at the 2023 NTW in Spokane, WA, as an exhibitor highlighting the NC farmers and sharing success stories and publications. A total of eleven North Carolinians including staff, partners, farmers, and veterans participated in the event. The event resulted in an increase in knowledge, networking, and opportunities for new collaboration.

Ohio

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



Rachel Jarman and Laura Akgerman, disability services coordinator, presented an overview of OAP services and typical farmer work practices to Wilmington College Rural Occupational Therapy students.

OAP hosted OAP farmers and OSU Extension educators at the Spring 2023 Peer-to-Peer Network meeting March 31. This was the first time OAP had invited Extension educators to the Peer-to-Peer event, and it gave farmers and educators a chance to interact and learn more about what OAP does for farmers, and how they engage with educators to share resources with farmers and the community.

Pennsylvania



Starting off with a big THANK YOU to the Washington AgrAbility and NAP staff for a wonderful week in Washington! Abbie Spackman and Kendra Martin attended the NTW, and from the sessions to the special events - it was a memorable week of connecting with colleagues and re-energizing around the mission of AgrAbility. Kudos to all involved!

Presentations to agricultural groups kicked up in March. Kendra Martin, outreach coordinator, presented at the Northumberland County Conservation District's winter forum on March 14 for farmers and agricultural workers in northeastern Pennsylvania. Content included AgrAbility services, assistive technology examples, and funding resources.

Abbie Spackman, project assistant, represented AgrAbility PA at the Western PA Grazing Conference on March 16. This conference focused on sustainable grazing practices, and attendees included farmers from across Pennsylvania; primarily beef, sheep, and goat producers. AgrAbility provided information on assistive technology related to livestock, grazing, weather exposure, and more.

AgrAbility PA pulled together a new handout to use for outreach and education with farmers - "A Guide to Low-Tech AT on the Farm". Take a look at it [HERE!](#)



Carolyn Henzi, graduate student, presented "Managing Stress on the Farm" in Spanish for more than 70 Spanish-speaking farm supervisors on March 31.

South Carolina

Some of the team from South Carolina traveled to Spokane, Washington, to attend the national conference and training workshop. The team attended training for new staff on Monday and enjoyed the information that was viewed as essential for them to use in the startup of their program. [More](#)

Tennessee



The 2023 AgrAbility National Training Workshop in Spokane, Washington, was another amazing conference! A total of seven individuals from Tennessee attended NTW and gained information that will be useful to the AgrAbility program in Tennessee. [More](#)

Tennessee AgrAbility and Tennessee Association of Rescue Squads partnered in an exhibit at the FFA Expo in Gatlinburg in March. The goal of the FFA Expo was to provide FFA members and advisors with the opportunity to discover new college, career, and commercial opportunities, and for exhibitors to make meaningful connections with TN FFA members and advisors. [More](#)



TN AgrAbility co-hosted with TN State University (TSU) the 2023 TSU Veteran Boot Camp in Nashville at Ellington Agriculture Center. Twenty veteran farmers took part in the three-day event. [More](#)

March means the start of the 2023 TN New Farmer Academy with beginning farmers eager to learn and dream big. TN AgrAbility provides scholarships to farmers with disabilities to attend annually. [More](#)

TN AgrAbility set up an assistive technology tool display at the Lawrence County Tree Day in cooperation with the Lawrence County Master Gardeners. TN AgrAbility staff spoke to 52 attendees, engaged participants with the AT tools, and gained referrals for new AgrAbility customers. It was a fun and productive day.



Tara Janssen, assistive technology specialist with STAR Center, made a farm/home visit to a Rutherford County farmer along with TN AgrAbility staff. After getting the grand tour of the farm, the group sat around the kitchen table (always the place to gather) to discuss different phone apps to help him with dyslexia. These phone apps will assist in reading drug labels, providing the correct information to the farmer as he prepares vaccinations for his cattle.

Texas

Texas AgrAbility Director Cheryl Grenwelge presented at the NTW in Spokane, Washington. Presentations included results from the veterans training program and interstate collaboration to support veterans and other beginning farmers and ranchers. Workshop archives can be viewed [HERE](#).

Applications for Cohort 14 of the BattleGround to Breaking Ground program are now open and will close on June 2, 2023. More information and application instructions can be found [HERE](#).

Texas AgrAbility hosted a webinar with AgriSafe Network on the AgriStress Helpline for Texas. Natalie Roy and Tara Haskins shared the purpose of the helpline and how to refer farmers and ranchers under stress. The webinar was recorded and can be viewed [HERE](#).

Texas AgrAbility hosted its first virtual peer group meeting on March 1st. Two current AgrAbility clients attended the first session and shared resources for modifying their farm equipment to meet their needs. Anyone interested in joining this peer group can do so [HERE](#).

Texas AgrAbility staff members met with three capstone OTD students to explore possible capstone project collaborations. Projects could include course development, educational materials development, farm and ranch assessment assistance, and evaluation.

Makenzie Thomas attended the QPR for Farm Families suicide prevention training from AgriSafe Network. This training better equips individuals working with farmers in distress or with mental health challenges.

Utah

AgrAbility of Utah staff members were excited to set up a display table at the Utah FFA State Convention held at Utah State University in Logan, UT, on March 9. Staff were able to visit with and explain AgrAbility to many of the 350 students and their families who traveled from across the state to attend.

On March 16, AgrAbility staff attended the Utah Assistive Technology Team Conference in Salt Lake City and learned about many of the new devices and trends in assistive technology. The event was organized by Utah Center for Assistive Technology and had over 200 people in attendance.

AgrAbility staff presented and set up a display table at the Utah Pork Producers Annual Conference on March 17. The event was held in Lehi, Utah, and was attended by over 30 pork producers from across the state.

On March 27, AgrAbility staff was able to present to 36 members of the Cache Interagency Council in Logan, UT.

Thanks to everyone who made the NTW in Spokane such a wonderful event! It was great to meet with such amazing and inspiring people!

Washington

What a busy and rewarding month March has been for Washington AgrAbility. The Washington team continued to attend conferences and share AgrAbility resources around the state while also preparing for the NTW in Spokane.

The Washington AgrAbility team had an amazing time attending and supporting the NTW in Spokane, Washington. A huge thanks to Tess, Jo Beth, and everyone at NAP for all of the hard work put into the conference. [More](#)

Deb tabled and demoed at the Whatcom Farm Expo on March 4.

Deb and Lisa Jones from NW Access Funds attended the NW Meat Processors Convention in Boise, ID, on March 30 - April 1.

Debbie and Emily presented about AgrAbility and displayed various AT items at a farm stress training on March 29.

Debbie and Emily are working with a Washington State conference attendee to help him advance his farming operation.

Deb had three home visits in Island, Whatcom, and Snohomish Counties, and Alyssa has had several home visits in Columbia County.

International AgrAbility Network News

AgrAbility for Africa

AgrAbility for Africa Easter eggs came in the form of wheelchairs. Happy Easter Season!



AgrAbility for Africa staff celebrated the Easter holiday within the community, breaking down barriers to participation, under a partnership with Arizona Sonora Border Projects for Inclusion (ARSOBO) as part of their global mission to advance employment inclusion for persons with disabilities around the world.

As the date edges closer, AgrAbility for Africa staff are in high gear in preparation for the inaugural 2023 AgrAbility for Africa training workshop in Uganda. The focus will be on building a rapport with different players in the rehabilitation space, learning about disability support systems in agriculture in Africa, the state of rehabilitation care across Africa,...

[More](#)

AgrAbility for Africa staff was honored to be a part of the 2023 NTW in Spokane, Washington. Great lessons were learned during the four-day event, and the team intends to localize best practices to enhance the quality of care and services for farmers, ranchers, and farm workers with disabilities across Africa.

AgrAbility in the News

Click titles below for news stories featuring AgrAbility projects .

- [Video series features Nebraska father-son farming team](#) (Nebraska AgrAbility)
- [AgrAbility Expo to Provide Hands-on Training](#) (Indiana AgrAbility Project)
- [Lessons learned from the field about farmers' behavioral health](#) (National AgrAbility Project)
- [ADM: Faces of Food: Lifeblood of Rural America.](#) Beckmans from Pender, Nebraska (Nebraska AgrAbility)
- [Extension speaker addressing suicide prevention](#) (Washington State AgrAbility Project)

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

- [Talking Total Farmer Health Podcast](#)
Total Farmer Health Model
Episode 19 • 1st April 2023 • AgriSafe Talking Total Farmer Health
- [Mike Duxbury: The blind farmer who uses his hands as his eyes](#)
- [Tribal Youth Use 'Seed Bombs' to Heal Wildfire-Damaged Lands](#)
- [USDA provides \\$123 million to ease farmers' financial risks](#)
- [Biden-Harris Administration Announces Availability of \\$1 Billion to Help Farmers, Ranchers and Rural Businesses Invest in Renewable Energy Systems and Energy-Efficiency Improvements](#)
- [1994 Tribal Scholarship Opportunities for Tribal College and University Students](#)
- [2023 Pick Tennessee Conference](#) (TN AgrAbility is not mentioned but staff and display are in the background and a TN Farmer Veteran is interviewed.)
- The University of Georgia, in addition to their agrileadHER annual virtual conference, has created the agrileadHER Virtual Community. [Click here](#) to read more or to join.
- [Farmworkers use Florida march to pressure other companies](#)
- [Climate change creates 'win-win' between bald eagles and farmers](#)

UpcomingEvents

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

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

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April 2023

Alaska

The bulk of the Alaska AgrAbility team attended the annual National Training Workshop March 22-23 in Spokane, WA. Those from the Alaska team that attended were Art Nash, Debu Misra, Alda Norris, and Peg Schaffhauser. The AKAgrAbility project also was honored to host Greg Kalal, AgrAbility client and seed potato farmer from Trapper Creek as the "first farmer" from Alaska to attend the event. Greg was able to connect with other veteran farmers and gain more knowledge of the extended resources that the national network for AgrAbility has to offer.

Submitted by DeShana York

April 2023

Colorado

The Colorado AgrAbility Project had a very successful 2023 Winter Workshop series! Candiss Leathers, project manager, and Jim Craig, rural rehabilitation specialist, focused on ergonomic impacts and demonstrated how to make changes to daily tasks on the farm or ranch. Dr. Rebecca Hill, co-director, informed attendees of the impacts of the Colorado River, and how it affects all Coloradoans. Chad Reznicek, behavioral health



specialist, dove into SAMHSA's Eight Dimensions of Wellness, giving everyone in attendance the chance to reflect on different ways to de-stress. This year, the Colorado AgrAbility Project was fortunate enough to partner with High Plains Intermountain Center for Agricultural Health and Safety (HICAHS); Whitney Pennington, outreach lead, was able to provide some personal protective equipment (PPE) to attendees and guide them to proper usage of said equipment.

The photo collage is a collection of the five 2023 Winter Workshops.

Submitted by Ellis Vidmar

April 2023

Florida

Florida AgrAbility attended the 6th Annual Emergency Preparedness Expo on March 7th, 2023. AgrAbility had a booth to share outreach materials among the participants. The event was attended by more than 200 participants, 27 vendors (community-based organizations), and multiple emergency management and first responder agencies. The people in attendance were highly engaged, learned a lot, and accessed important resources to better prepare themselves for disasters.

Florida AgrAbility also organized a webinar to introduce the Florida AgrAbility Project to the University of Florida Extension faculty. Project staff continue engaging with clientele and conducting worksite assessments. An introductory video was prepared to raise money, and the video will be used during The Amazing Give Day on April 20th.

Submitted by Cassandra Ward

April 2023

Georgia



Mental Health First Aid full-day trainings were taught to 68 Young Farmer teachers across the state of Georgia. This effort was in conjunction with Southern Region Farm and Ranch Stress Assistance Network. The Young Farmer (YF) program was created in 1951 to provide educational instruction and opportunities to adults interested or engaged in agriculture, and it seeks to increase proficiency in agricultural production,

management, agribusiness, and leadership. Currently, there are 61 active YF programs across the state of Georgia. School systems apply for a state of Georgia grant to have a Young Farmer teacher. If approved, the teacher will spend 30% of his/her time working with students in the school system. The remaining 70% is as a state employee working hands-on in the community with young farmers. While they often work collaboratively with Cooperative Extension, they are a different organization with somewhat different responsibilities.



Georgia AgrAbility staff met with the Department of Veterans Affairs' community engagement and partnership teams along with local community leaders to create community coalitions with the purpose of establishing a resource rich, self-sustaining community support system for individuals in crisis throughout the southern Georgia counties of Decatur, Lowndes, Grady, Colquitt, and Thomas. Over 100 leaders from the faith community, healthcare workers, first responders, veterans, business operators, nonprofit organizations, and others attended these five sessions to discuss how they may be of continued service to their communities and how to increase overall awareness and reduce the number of suicides across the state.

Submitted by AgrAbility in Georgia

April 2023

Indiana



Indiana AgrAbility exhibited at the recent Indiana Small Farms Conference in Danville, Indiana. The Small Farms Conference, organized and hosted by Purdue Extension's Diversified Farming and Food Systems Team, provides educational and networking opportunities for those involved in small-scale, specialty, value-added, and urban agriculture. Over 500 farmers from throughout the state participated, along with 50 exhibitors representing commercial, government, and educational organizations. Joe Ricker, AgrAbility veteran outreach coordinator, and Ed Sheldon, Extension outreach coordinator, attended the conference and staffed the AgrAbility exhibit. The display also featured other Purdue Agricultural Safety & Health Program resources.

Submitted by Ed Sheldon

April 2023

Missouri

March 25, Missouri AgrAbility exhibited during the 99th Annual Jefferson County Agricultural Conference in Hillsboro, Missouri. Attendees tried out ergonomic small hand tools and picked up AgrAbility education-based resources, farm safety booklets, and prevention of secondary injury materials. Mary Bolling with Lincoln University Missouri Innovative Small Farmers' Outreach Program and Missouri AgrAbility co-PI presented "This and That - Ergonomics to Protect Yourself on the Farm," and demonstrated short- and long-handled ergonomic hand tools.

Missouri AgrAbility sent 12 delegates to the 2023 AgrAbility National Training Workshop in Spokane, Washington. Participants included the University of Missouri Extension, 4-H, Lincoln University Missouri Innovative Small Farmers' Outreach Program (ISFOP), Brain Injury Association of Missouri, a Missouri AgrAbility client farmer, and four veteran farmers. Missouri AgrAbility also exhibited, presented during the poster session, and provided four conference breakout sessions.



Submitted by: Willard Downs, Elizabeth Picking, Susan Jaster, David Middleton, and Karen Funkenbusch

Missouri AgrAbility partnered with the Brain Injury Association of Missouri (BIA-MO) for the Brain Injury Fact of the Day social media campaign during March 2023, which is Brain Injury Awareness Month. A unique brain injury-related fact was posted each day on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram, as well as agriculture, health, veteran, and other websites. Of these social media posts, three were videos featuring Missouri AgrAbility clients through the cooperation of Karen Funkenbusch and Tevin Uthlaut with Missouri AgrAbility, and Maureen Cunningham and Andrew Edmonston with the Brain Injury Association of Missouri. Immediate results of the Facebook posts were 5,608 engagements. Nearly 24,000 people were reached through Facebook, which is a 27 percent increase from the 2022 Brain Injury Fact of the Day social media campaign.

Dr. Brent Masel, medical director for the Brain Injury Association of America (BIAA), was a featured speaker for the "Brain Injury: Chronic Health Condition, Management and Prevention" session at the AgrAbility NTW. Attendees learned that brain injury is not an event or the final outcome, but rather it is the beginning of a disease process. Discussion included that no brain injury is a static process, regardless of whether it is classified as a mild, moderate, or severe brain injury or concussion. There was also information about brain injury being disease causative or accelerative. Research shared by Dr. Masel showed the correlation between brain injury and health conditions of post-traumatic epilepsy, stroke, brain tumors, multiple sclerosis, and sleep disturbances. He also provided extensive information on the relationship between brain injury and psychosis, depression, mania, PTSD, aggression, and Alzheimer's-type dementia. Karen Funkenbusch, PI for Missouri AgrAbility, shared examples of successful AgrAbility clients and encouraged AgrAbility staff to be prepared to recognize unreported or diagnosed brain injuries that may affect other health conditions of the farmers.

Submitted by: Maureen Cunningham

April 2023

Nebraska

On March 29-30, around 6,000 Nebraska FFA members, advisors, and guests participated in the annual Nebraska State FFA Convention. Held in Lincoln, Nebraska, participants took part in numerous general sessions, competitive events, workshops focused on leadership, a career fair, and educational tours. During the conference, Emily Jacobson and John Davis were on site providing information about AgrAbility and answering questions. FFA members also had hands-on opportunities to learn about assistive technology by using some of the tools to overcome conditions like vision impairment.



Nebraska AgrAbility team members attending the NTW included Angie Howell, Aaron Yoder, Emily Jacobson, Nancy Frecks, and Soni Cochran. Past Nebraska AgrAbility teammate and current Nebraska AgrAbility Advisory Council member Susan Harris also attended. The Nebraska team was impressed with the scope and quality of the learning opportunities again this year. Meeting new people, making connections, and strengthening relationships with AgrAbility colleagues from across the country is always a highlight. The AgrAbility clients attending NTW leave everyone inspired. Here are a few takeaways from the Nebraska AgrAbility team:



- "The Amputee Coalition had a great session on workforce programming. There are several webinars offered through the Amputee Coalition's website. Sign up/subscribe!"
- "I really think this was one of the most beneficial conferences I have gone to."
- "The low-tech technology session was very interesting and showed 'tech' things so simple you have to think 'why didn't I think of that!'"
- "During the fundraising session, I learned we could reach out to fraternities and sororities on campuses to help with fundraising or volunteering."
- "This was a great conference and I look forward to next year!"
- "I loved engaging with those who were on the tour bus and at the sessions. The speakers each day were so inspirational... and just being in the presence of wonderful AgrAbility folks, clients including the veterans, is something I cherish."
- "The session on resiliency and SAMHSA's Eight Domains of Wellness really made me think about how we can be intentional and find opportunities to integrate this in the work we do every day and in our own personal lives as self-care."
- "I was reminded that AgrAbility programs aren't always the same in every community. It is important to remember we may not fully understand the challenges people have, their experiences, and what they have overcome. When we work with people, we need to meet them where they are."
- "I attended the tour featuring a Hutterite Colony. It was



nothing like what I expected and a unique learning experience. We were allowed to view the colony's farming operations which spanned 17,000 acres and included an Angus breeding herd. We also learned a little about their culture. I left the colony with more questions and wanting to learn more."



Submitted by Soni Cochran

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April 2023

Ohio



Ohio AgrAbility staff and farmers enjoyed attending the NTW in Spokane, WA. Everyone welcomed the opportunities to meet new people, learn from their colleagues and other presenters, network, and share ideas to grow their Project. OAP Rural Rehabilitation Coordinator Rachel Jarman shared the ways she uses social media to find assistive technology and vendors to support the mission of keeping Ohio farmers working safely and productively. Rachel co-presented with Ginger Scaife, rehabilitation program specialist (and Ohio AgrAbility liaison) with Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities, and Project Director Dee Jepsen on how Ohio AgrAbility partners with Voc Rehab in Ohio, and offered suggestions on advocacy for an AgrAbility liaison in other states.

Submitted by Laura Akgerman

April 2023

South Carolina

Some of the team from South Carolina traveled to Spokane, Washington, to attend the national conference and training workshop. The team attended training for new staff on Monday and enjoyed the information that was viewed as essential for them to use in the startup of their program. Staff learned important information on all aspects of AgrAbility and the opportunities it can bring to the state. The team was also able to attend informative sessions that broadened their understanding of AgrAbility and the many purposes it serves. The conference overall in the team's eyes was a success, and they were able to bring home very important information for the success of AgrAbility in South Carolina.

Submitted by AgrAbility in South Carolina

April 2023

Tennessee

The 2023 AgrAbility National Training Workshop in Spokane, Washington, was another amazing conference! A total of seven individuals from Tennessee attended NTW and gained information that will be useful to the AgrAbility program in Tennessee. Attendees visited colleagues, made new friends, learned from excellent speakers and other state programs, plus there were many opportunities to network with others. Thanks to the wonderful hosts, [Washington State AgrAbility Project](#), and [National AgrAbility Project](#), plus [Farm Credit Mid-America](#) for sponsoring all the farmers to attend! The 2024 AgrAbility NTW will be held in GA.



Tennessee AgrAbility and Tennessee Association of Rescue Squads partnered in an exhibit at the FFA Expo in Gatlinburg in March. The goal of the FFA Expo was to provide FFA members and advisors with the opportunity to discover new college, career, and commercial opportunities, and for exhibitors to make meaningful connections with TN FFA members and advisors. With an attendance of 4,500 FFA members and

advisors, the Expo was a huge success. TN AgrAbility and TARS spoke to an estimated 1,200 members/advisors. They learned about the TN Grain Bin Safety/Rescue Awareness trainings, TN AgrAbility, and the National AgrAbility assistive technology curriculum for FFA Chapters, and were able to work with and view some cool AT tools.

TN AgrAbility co-hosted with TN State University (TSU) the 2023 TSU Veteran Boot Camp in Nashville at Ellington Agriculture Center. Twenty veteran farmers took part in the three-day event. They learned about the resources available to Tennessee farmers and were provided the opportunity to tour local farms. TN AgrAbility and TSU staff met inspiring veterans who want to farm in TN, and learned about other programs available from UT/TSU Extension and USDA. Producers were able to look at and learn about AT devices provided by TN AgrAbility and the STAR Center in Jackson. A big thank you to the TN Department of Agriculture for the use of the Ellington Ag Center. Thanks is also extended to Jordan Farms, Sweeter Day Farms, Liberty Farms, and Kennedy Farms - and to all the veteran farmers who graciously shared their stories and opened their farms to the group.



March means the start of the 2023 TN New Farmer Academy with beginning farmers eager to learn and dream big. TN AgrAbility provides scholarships to farmers with disabilities to attend annually. Ten scholarships are provided in each of the three regions of the state. This year marked the first year that farmers with hearing impairments planned to attend. To accommodate these farmers, the STAR Center recommended using the free built-in Live Transcribe (Android), or Live Captioning (iOS), or the [Hand Talk app](#) that costs approximately \$10. TNAP plans to monitor these tools to see how effectively they provide needed assistance.

Submitted by Tennessee AgrAbility Project

April 2023

Washington

The Washington AgrAbility team had an amazing time attending and supporting the NTW in Spokane, Washington. A huge thanks to Tess, Jo Beth, and everyone at NAP for all of the hard work put into the conference. Also, a huge thank you to everyone who traveled to this scenic state. The Washington AgrAbility staff hope you enjoyed your time here, and hope you come back!

The Washington team attended various sessions throughout the conference, tabled, and presented a poster during the reception. Don McMoran presented and participated in several sessions including the Cultural Humility Panel, the Farm and Ranch Stress Assistance Network updates, and Farmer Focus sessions. The team is extremely excited to promote the AT they learned about, collaborate with other SRAPs, and continue advancing the Washington AgrAbility project with all their new knowledge and ideas. Thank you to everyone who presented and attended!

Submitted by Alyssa Wade

April 2023

AgrAbility for Africa

As the date edges closer, AgrAbility for Africa staff are in high gear in preparation for the inaugural 2023 AgrAbility for Africa training workshop in Uganda. The focus will be on building a rapport with different players in the rehabilitation space, learning about disability support systems in agriculture in Africa, the state of rehabilitation care across Africa, rural mental health in Africa, farming with disabilities in Africa via stories from farmers, work site assessment and policy review, markets, and financing of care and equipment in Africa, among other topics. Organized by AgrAbility for Africa staff, the workshop dates are June 5th - 6th, 2023, in Entebbe, Uganda.

Submitted by Mutumba Faisal

April 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 National 4-H Conference
Dates April 14-19, 2023
City, State Arlington, Virginia
Contact Info/Web link <https://tinyurl.com/zjbmxcbr>

Name AgrAbility Veteran Community of Interest
Dates April 20, 2023, at 2:00 p.m. EDT
City, State EventPlace
Contact Info/Web link Joe Ricker: ricker2@purdue.edu, (262) 388-1261 To join the meeting: <https://purdue-edu.zoom.us/j/92032719179?pwd=TmVOWCt4eFJqR1RpZjY0WlI1ZjJJQT09>

Name 2023 WORLD PORK EXPO
Dates June 7-9, 2023
City, State Des Moines, Iowa
Contact Info/Web link <https://www.worldpork.org/all-about-expo/>

Name Horse Progress Days
Dates June 30 - July 1, 2023
City, State Shipshewana, Indiana
Contact Info/Web link <https://horseprogressdays.com/>

Name 2023 agrileadHER virtual conference
Dates November 1-2, 2023
City, State Virtual Event Online
Contact <https://www.agrileadher.com/>

