

AgrAbility e•Note

July 2023

A monthly update for AgrAbility projects and friends of AgrAbility

National AgrAbility Project News

The next NAP regional workshop, "Mālama the Farmer, Caring for Yourself and Each Other," is taking place at the [Grand Nanihoa Hotel](#) in Hawai'i, October 17-18. This workshop is being planned in conjunction with and supported by the Western Regional Agricultural Stress Assistance Program and the University of Hawai'i, and will focus on behavioral health resources, assistive technology, preventing injury, and business planning. Reserve a hotel room by clicking on the hotel name above. Registration is open. More information and the registration link are available on the NAP website under Training and Events, or [click here](#).



The 2024 NTW will be held in Georgia. The planning committee has reviewed the proposals from hotels and have narrowed the hotel list and are finalizing contract details. More information about the NTW will be out soon. Anyone interested in joining the NTW planning committee should send an email to Tess at tmckeel@goodwillfingerlakes.org.



Steve Swain and Lisa Becker presented on June 7th at the AgrAbility regional workshop focused on veterans in farming in Indianapolis. Topics included the assessment process, the Toolbox (online), and the loan library. Specific items were demonstrated, and specific examples of assessments were discussed.

Paul Jones gave a presentation on accessible gardening and provided an exhibit at the 2023 International Master Gardeners Conference in Kansas City on June 19-21. Approximately 1,100 people participated in the conference, which included a wide variety of sessions and tours, including one of urban farms engaged in production agriculture.



Toolbox Spotlight

A [Loader-Mounted Grab Handle](#) helps one with limited leg strength more easily access the seats of certain John Deere or Kubota sub-compact tractors(See websites for listing of specific tractor and loader models). Made of steel, the product is coated with textured bed-liner



material. It can be affixed on the left or right side (mounting hardware included), and requires no modifications to either tractor or loader.

State and Regional AgrAbility Project News

Colorado



Colorado AgrAbility Program Coordinator Ellis Vidmar attended an event, "Apps with AgWell," with Rocky Mountain Farmers Union's (RMFU) non-profit project, AgWell. The event was hosted at a local brewery, and RMFU purchased appetizers for anyone who worked in agriculture. [More](#)

Colorado AgrAbility's behavioral health specialist, Chad Reznicek, partnered with AgWell to host workshops at the state 4-H convention that took place at CSU campus June 20-22. Three workshops were offered on the topic "Stronger together. Learn how to better support your friends and family experiencing mental health challenges and hard times." [More](#)

Florida

During the month of June, the Florida AgrAbility staff conducted and participated in several different forms of outreach.

On June 8th, staff members of the Florida AgrAbility project held an educational webinar "Disability - It's Not What You Think." The webinar discussed terminology for and in support of the disability community. [More](#)

Following this webinar, on June 10th AgrAbility staff members presented at the 25th Family Café in Orlando. The Family Café exists to provide individuals with disabilities and their families with an opportunity for collaboration, advocacy, friendship, and empowerment... [More](#)



Florida AgrAbility attended the 14th Annual Youth Field Day in Ona, Florida (June 29). The event was attended by a total of 213 youth and their parents.

From June 19th to the 23rd, the Florida AgrAbility case coordinator staffed a booth at the 2023 Florida Cattlemen's Association in Marco Island. This event brings in several hundred farmers, ranchers, and those working in the agriculture field. Florida AgrAbility made key connections with people in the industry and contacted 75 people.

FL AgrAbility Evaluation Director David Diehl presented a poster presentation during the International Society for Agricultural Safety and Health Conference in Tampa, FL (June 18-21, 2023). The poster was on "AgrAbility State Project Interviews: What Have We Learned?".



Georgia



Veteran outreach continues to be a focus for the GA AgrAbility team. Two "Mental Health First Aid for Military, Veterans, and their Families" courses were conducted resulting in 10 new Mental Health First Aiders. [More](#)

Staff attended the International Farm Transition Network Conference on June 22nd. The International Farm Transition Network is a network of service providers from different professional backgrounds working to assist farm businesses with their successful transition to an identified successor(s). [More](#)



Indiana



Linda Tarr and Lisa Becker staffed a booth with INDATA (Indiana's AT Act Program) at the Indiana Rural Health Association Annual Conference at French Lick Resort and Conference Center June 13-14. Over 600 individuals involved in rural health services attended the conference.

Several Indiana AgrAbility staff, advisors, and consultants staffed a booth at Horse Progress Days at the Michiana Events Center in Shipshewana on June 30 & July 1. There were over 30,000 attendees and there was a lot of interest in AgrAbility services.



Michigan

Michigan AgrAbility staff are continuing to work with their farmers throughout the irrigation and summer season.

Missouri

Missouri AgrAbility marketing, networking, and assisting client farmers and their families' activities during June 2023 included:

Liz Harrison and Tina Edholm, both of health and human sciences educators at the University of Missouri Extension, attended the Columbia Center for Urban Agriculture (CCUA) Field Day on Sunday, June 25th. [More](#)



What's the buzz? Missouri AgrAbility and its stakeholders provided two in-person hands-on accessible beekeeping programs for rural and urban farmers with disabilities and their dependents. Veteran volunteer Eric Work was on-hand to assist John Fuller, Travis Harper, Joni Harper, Amy Patillo, and Patrick Byers, all from the University of Missouri Extension.

MU Extension field and campus faculty attended the 3rd Annual Veterans Resource Fair hosted by the CCUA with sponsorship from the Wounded Warrior Project. This FREE event featured local employers looking to recruit, community resources, social organizations, Extension programs, and activity groups for veterans and their families. [More](#)



Jenna Korff is wrapping up her internship with Missouri AgrAbility at the University of Missouri Extension. A student at the University of Missouri in Columbia, Jenna is working toward a degree in health sciences with an emphasis in rehabilitation

science, and minorning in human development and family science. [More](#)

Susan Jaster, Missouri AgrAbility outreach coordinator with Lincoln University Cooperative Extension Innovative Small Farmers' Outreach Program, had an article, "Jesup Wagon 2.0 Strengthens Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion for Missouri Farmers and Ranchers," published in the July 2023 Association of Extension Administrators (AEA) Extension Today.

Missouri AgrAbility marketing and networking activities during June 2023 included: [More](#)

- Sponsorship recognition at the BIA-MO Survivor and Family Seminar
- An exhibit during the Missouri Rehabilitation Association Conference
- Being a featured sponsor at the Brain Injury Association of Missouri One-Day Regional Camps
- Missouri AgrAbility being discussed during the BIA-MO Networking Coffee for Professionals on June 20
- The sharing of Missouri AgrAbility information with 14 individuals receiving BIA-MO community resource services for the first time.

Nebraska

Due to a lack of available funding support, the Nebraska AgrAbility team advocated for legislative funding for assistive technology for farmers and ranchers with disabilities. With the support of the Nebraska Farm Bureau, a bill was drafted and presented to the state legislature. [More](#)

New Mexico



NMAP partners NMTAP and UNM have been collaborating to create a curriculum to allow NM rehab professionals to 3D print assistive technology. NMTAP beta-tested the instructional materials and made a smartphone magnification stand: [Smartphone Magnification Stand - Makers Making Change](#)

To improve community awareness of NM AgrAbility, the farm site evaluator and UNM faculty will speak at the New Mexico Occupational Therapy Association conference in August and the Conference on Aging in September. If possible, a NM farmer with a success story will co-present.

NMAP project partner Mandy's Farm is proceeding with training for seven farm apprentices that includes farm visits and providing mentorship and education on transplanting, germinating, mulching, and more to over 40 children with Nature Niños, an outdoor education group based in Albuquerque.

Mandy's Farm has installed improved accessible surfaces in farm/garden spaces from April 2023 - June 2023. They have installed over 850 square feet of accessible farm/garden surface, with a total of 1,500 square feet planned to be installed this year.

North Carolina

On June 1, 2023, NC AgrAbility volunteered at the Boots on the Ground training for veterans in agriculture organized by Veterans Employment Base Camp and Organic Garden together with the University of Mt. Olive! Twenty-five veterans attended the event.



On June 15 at the NC A&T SU Small Farm Field Day, NC AgrAbility participated as a poster presenter, exhibitor, and attendee. The poster presentation was titled "Behavioral



Change as a Key to Reducing Injuries in The Ag Workplace." [More](#)

NC AgrAbility attended the Western Central NC Association of County Agricultural Agents State Conference on June 21 to present AgrAbility to participants at the different sessions to increase networking and promote referrals.

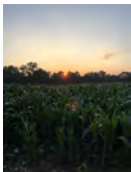
Ohio

Ohio AgrAbility Disability Services Coordinator Laura Akgerman exhibited at the National Amish Handicap Gathering in Berlin, Ohio, June 2 - 3. The event was attended by over 300 people from across the Midwest and South. [More](#)



Ohio AgrAbility materials and resources were displayed at "Spinal Cord Injury Research, Care and Community at OSU: Tradition, Community and Outlook," a symposium featuring research, advocacy, and information about spinal cord injury, held at OSU June 30. The event was a great opportunity for networking and sharing information about Ohio AgrAbility services.

Pennsylvania



It's sum, sum, summertime! The corn is more than knee high across the state and farmers have settled into the season. The AgrAbility PA team has focused on behind-the-scenes client services - working with a wide range of new clients, farm types, and disabilities. [More](#)

AgrAbility PA staff members have been out and about across the state:

- Linda Fetzer presented ag safety strategies for farm visits
- Kendra Martin presented to farmers, who were mostly veterans, at Rodale Institute's annual summer training program for veterans in agriculture. [More](#)



AgrAbility PA pulled together a new handout to use for outreach and education with farmers - *A Guide to High-Tech AT on the Farm*. Take a look at the PDF here.



The PA team also created new banners to use when exhibiting at outreach events. The farmer silhouettes stand about 5ft. tall and feature a male and female with an open-ended question. [More](#)

Tennessee

STAR Center's statewide assistive technology (AT) team is dedicated experts who revolutionize accessibility and empowerment through cutting-edge assistive technology. From innovative devices to personalized solutions, they are there to empower individuals with disabilities and unlock new possibilities. [More](#)



Memphis Botanical Gardens welcomed 21 service providers, therapists, teachers, and others involved in therapeutic programming to the Horticultural Therapy Workshop: Healing through Horticultural Therapy, June 8-9. [More](#)

Staff are constantly amazed at the servant hearts of Stephanie and Michael

Trost, TN AgrAbility farmers with Frontline Gardens, who keep spreading hope and purpose with one raised garden bed at a time. (Read more about them [HERE.](#)) [More](#)

STAR Center and TN AgrAbility teamed up to introduce assistive technology tools to 31 Tennessee State University occupational therapy students. Only one out of 31 students had any agriculture background. [More](#)



Congratulations to Charley Jordan, TN AgrAbility farmer veteran. He was elected in June as the new director at large for the American Horticulture Therapy Association (AHTA). Charley continues to keep expanding his therapeutic horticulture activities through his flower workshops... [More](#)

Supporting farmers and rural communities is a true passion of those who have a sincere interest in a vibrant agriculture economy. Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) and Question Persuade Refer (QPR) courses are specifically designed for rural community members. [More](#)

Texas

Makenzie Thomas presented at the first Texas Technology Access Program's assistive technology conference, "Viva La Vida with AT!" The presentation, "Farming with Assistive Technology," included a demonstration of assistive hand tools and assistive technology options for farmers with disabilities. Vocational Rehabilitation counselors and individuals with disabilities throughout the state were in attendance.



Texas AgrAbility attended the Discover Extension Share Fair and promoted Texas AgrAbility services and programs to 25 new Extension agents and specialists.

Cheryl Grenwolge and Ellie Gandara Castillo provided 41 occupational therapy students with training on assistive technology in the agricultural workplace. Students were able to learn about AgrAbility services, explore assistive technology for farming occupations, and examine client case stories and examples.

Texas AgrAbility Total Farmer Health Coach Cene Cleaton delivered "QPR for Agriculture Communities" training to six agriculture agency personnel and veteran farmers and ranchers.

Utah

Program Coordinator Randall Bagley attended the NAP regional workshop in Indianapolis on June 6-8 and learned how to better serve the veterans in Utah. Thanks to NAP and Indiana AgrAbility staff for arranging such a wonderful and informative workshop.

AgrAbility of Utah staff attended the 17th Annual Governor's Native American Summit in Orem, UT, on June 23 and networked with others to better serve the Native Americans in the state. Utah is home to eight distinct tribal nations and has over 33,000 Native Americans.

On June 26, AgrAbility staff was able to present to 21 members of the Cache Interagency Council in Logan, UT.

AgrAbility of Utah staff set up a booth and display at the Urban and Small Farms Field Day in Kaysville, Utah, on June 28 and visited with many of the 120 attendees. The event was sponsored by Utah State University Extension and Western SARE. Tours focused on fruit, vegetable, and cut flower research along with weed management and irrigation

techniques.

Virginia

AgrAbility Virginia is currently working with 29 open farmer client cases at various levels of engagement and need, including an amputee farmer in Floyd County with whom staff is looking into securing adaptive technology clutches for his vehicles in collaboration with the Virginia Department for Aging and Rehabilitation Services and Easterseals UCP.

Staff attended and tabled at the Virginia Dairy Expo on July 14th.

June 15th, AgrAbility Virginia field staff member Jeremy Daubert conducted a [Farmer's Dinner Theatre at Showalter's Orchard](#) in collaboration with Valley Urgent Care, Virginia 4H, and FFA.

AgrAbility Virginia is updating its display in the (VSU) Mobile Agriculture Education Unit to increase engagement and visibility of their program.

Washington

Summer is here and the Washington AgrAbility team is gearing up to reach thousands of people through Washington State's beautiful warm-weather events!

Alyssa Wade, Washington AgrAbility co-coordinator, attended a crop tour in Ritzville on June 2nd, where she displayed a table with AgrAbility and farm stress information to a crowd of dryland wheat farmers.

Alyssa Wade also attended field days at the WSU (Washington State University) Lind Dryland Research Station in Lind, WA, on June 15th and at the Wilke Research and Extension Farm in Davenport, WA, on June 29th. [More](#)

Emily Whittier, Washington AgrAbility co-coordinator, tabled at the White Salmon Farmers Market on June 27th. It was a fantastic opportunity, and staff look forward to tabling at more farmers markets.

Emily Whittier also presented on June 29th at the 2023 WSU Variety Trials in Bickleton, WA. The presentation expanded on the AgrAbility overview and showed attendees how to navigate the National AgrAbility Toolbox. [More](#)

Emily Whittier met with Underwood Conservation District on June 22 to discuss the district's farm tool library and a potential partnership with the assistive technology lending library maintained by WSU and Washington AgrAbility.

Don McMoran, Washington AgrAbility program director, has been busy helping plan the Western Region AgrAbility meeting in Hilo, Hawaii, in October. He is excited to help arrange such a fabulous conference and tour, and hopes there will be a large attendance.

Debbie Fredricks, Washington AgrAbility co-coordinator, has also had a busy month. She met with the Pacific County Extension office to share more about AgrAbility with them and set up plans to table together at their fair. [More](#)

Debbie also watched a presentation titled Queer Farming: A Lived Experience, through the AgriSafe Learning Lab in an effort to be informed and prepared for all farmers that may contact the Washington team for assistance.

Debbie went on a farm visit in Port Angeles and is continuing to help her clients.

Deb Eidsness, Washington AgrAbility co-coordinator, is industrious as ever with six current home visits and more pending. She is preparing for fairs and is heavily involved with the 4-H and FFA youth in her area.

Washington AgrAbility team is looking forward to the upcoming fair season and the staff have been working on engagement strategies for all the upcoming outreach opportunities.

International AgrAbility Network News

AgrAbility for Africa



Thanks to all who attended the AgrAbility for Africa training workshop in Entebbe, Uganda. Staff hope that everyone had an enjoyable and educational time. AgrAbility for Africa looks forward to continued participation in the 2024 event. Staff continue to welcome thoughts and suggestions that will help improve the 2024 workshop. [More](#)

StaffChanges and Recognition

Colorado

The Colorado AgrAbility Project is excited to welcome Ashley Buchanan, M. A. Ed/SPE, M. Ext. Ed.! Ashley serves as a Rural Rehabilitation Specialist with our non-profit partner, Goodwill of Colorado! Prior to joining the project, Ashley worked with the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation as both a VR counselor and business outreach specialist. [More](#)



Tennessee



TN AgrAbility Says Farewell to Tara Janssen, assistive technology specialist with The STAR Center, TN AgrAbility's non-profit partner, who took a position with Ohio Veterans Administration in June. Her passion lies with serving veterans, working with those with physical impairments, and integrating technology into the lives of farmers with disabilities through STAR's partnership with the TN AgrAbility Project. Tennessee's loss is Ohio's gain!

Texas

Megan (Azopardi) Peveto graduated from Texas A&M in 2018 with a Bachelor of Science degree in agricultural leadership and development. Being the spouse of an army veteran has driven her passion for working with military populations. She started working for AgriLife Extension in 2021 and has worked in several educational and training capacities. Megan has supported individuals with disabilities through post-secondary education and training programs as a mentor. Megan will be assisting Texas AgrAbility and BattleGround to Breaking Ground by coordinating educational events and programs, assisting with client case management, and providing support for program development.



Click titles below for news stories featuring AgrAbility projects .

- [Rep. Molinaro calls for help for farm families with disabilities](#) (AgrAbility)
- [Texas AgrAbility helps farmers, ranchers overcome challenges](#) (Texas AgrAbility)
- [SAFETY SUPPER - Local Dinner Theatre Addresses Farm Safety Topics](#) (AgrAbility Virginia)
- [Illinois AgrAbility Ready to Serve Farmers across the State](#) (Illinois AgrAbility)
- [AgrAbility & WisTech Partner At Farm Tech Days](#) (AgrAbility of Wisconsin)
- [PROGRAM HELPS ILLINOIS FARMERS AND WORKERS KEEP WORKING DESPITE HEALTH CHALLENGES](#) (Illinois AgrAbility)

OtherNews

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

- [Talking Total Farmer Health Podcast Rural Telehealth - Part 1 of 2](#)
Episode 22 • 1st July 2023 • AgriSafe Talking Total Farmer Health • AgriSafe
- [USDA to Invest \\$300 Million in 50 Projects Assisting Underserved Producers](#)
- Texas AgrAbility provided three links to tools that may be of interest to AgrAbility staff and clients: [PTO link and quick-hitch](#), [Grampa's Weeder](#), and [Grampa's Gardening Apron for Women and Men](#)
- [Biden-Harris Administration Announces Intended Investment of Approximately \\$300 Million in 50 Projects Increasing Land, Capital, and Market Access for Underserved Producers](#)
- [New Report Explores Benefits of Co-location of Solar, AG Land](#)
- [NRCS Partners With the 'Grandmother of Juneteenth'](#)
- [15th America's Farmers Market Celebration has \\$15K in prizes](#)
- [New SARE Bulletin: Transitioning to Organic Production](#)
- [Ukraine: FAO and WFP join forces to clear agricultural land from remnants of the war and help farmers resume production](#)
- [Josh Allen, Buffalo Bills QB, kicks off star-studded line up on Like a Farmer video series](#)

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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July 2023

Colorado



Colorado AgrAbility Program Coordinator Ellis Vidmar attended an event, "Apps with AgWell" with Rocky Mountain Farmers Union's non-profit project, AgWell. The event was hosted at a local brewery, and RMFU purchased appetizers for anyone who worked in agriculture. Ellis made great connections with ag producers and with the representatives from Rocky Mountain Farmers Union. Colorado AgrAbility hopes to partner with AgWell and RMFU in the future!

Colorado AgrAbility's behavioral health specialist Chad Reznicek partnered with AgWell to host workshops at the State 4H convention that took place at CSU campus June 20-22. Three workshops were offered on the topic, "Stronger together. Learn how to better support your friends and family experiencing mental health challenges and hard times".

The workshops focused on engaging amazing 4H youth in discussing social connectedness as the most important protective factor for overall wellbeing. Participants were guided in discussions and activities exploring their experiences on topics such as recognizing when others are struggling, how to give and receive help, and increasing awareness of the strategies and resources to support others going through tough times. The future of farming and ranching depends on strong agricultural and rural communities. It was very encouraging to see the awareness, creativity, skill, and genuine care of the 4H youth and to learn how much they are already doing to strengthen their communities.

Staff Changes and Recognition

The Colorado AgrAbility Project is excited to welcome Ashley Buchanan, M. A. Ed/SPE, M. Ext. Ed.! Ashley serves as a Rural Rehabilitation Specialist with our non-profit partner, Goodwill of Colorado!



Prior to joining the project, Ashley worked with the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation as both a VR counselor and business outreach specialist. She was a special education teacher within elementary, middle, and high schools in multiple rural portions of Colorado. Ashley prides herself on the experiences she has with both the youth and adult populations with disabilities and their families within rural areas and having an agricultural connection with them. Ashley did not grow up in a rural area of the state but lived in a very rural part of Nebraska for a short time and fell in love with the culture and closeness of a smaller community. She is extremely excited to be a part of the Colorado AgrAbility team as she has known about this project for some time and loves what it stands for and hopes to make a real difference in the lives of individuals who are within agricultural related occupations.

Submitted by Ellis Vidmar

July 2023

Florida

On June 8th, staff members of the Florida AgrAbility project held an education webinar "Disability - It's Not What You Think". The webinar discussed terminology for and in support of the disability community. It also explored the culture of disability through presenters sharing their professional and personal experiences. The webinar recognized stereotypes, misconceptions, and stigmas surrounding the disability community. "Disability - It's Not What You Think" had a great turnout and welcomed 34 participants. Participants were very engaged and provided positive feedback.

Following this webinar, on June 10th AgrAbility staff members presented at the 25th Family Café in Orlando. The Family Café exists to provide individuals with disabilities and their families with an opportunity for collaboration, advocacy, friendship, and empowerment by serving as a facilitator of communication, a space for dialogue, and a source of information. The session provided attendees with information about Florida AgrAbility, as well as work opportunities for individuals with disabilities wishing to work in agriculture.

Submitted by Serap Gorucu

July 2023

Georgia



Veteran outreach continues to be a focus for the GA AgrAbility team. Two "Mental Health First Aid for Military, Veterans, and their Families" courses were conducted resulting in 10 new mental health first aiders. "Mental Health First Aid for Military, Veterans, and their Families" is an evidence-based and early intervention training program developed for adults to learn how to assist and support members of their community who may be experiencing a mental health or substance use challenge. Additional training opportunities are ongoing with two additional courses currently scheduled for July.

Staff attended the International Farm Transition Network Conference on June 22nd. The International Farm Transition Network is a network of service providers from different professional backgrounds working to assist farm businesses with their successful transition to an identified successor(s). The conference featured sessions from professionals on their experience/research with farm families and a panel of young farmers talking about their experiences with the succession process. Two GA AgrAbility staff members are certified farm succession coordinators.



Submitted by Georgia AgrAbility Project

July 2023

Missouri

Missouri AgrAbility marketing, networking, and assisting client farmers and their families' activities during June 2023 included:

Liz Harrison and Tina Edholm, both of Health and Human Sciences at the University of Missouri Extension, attended the Columbia Center for Urban Agriculture (CCUA) Field Day on Sunday, June 25th. They chatted with approximately 75 rural and urban community members during the 5-hour event. Tina offered Missouri AgrAbility information as well as mental wellness resources, teletherapy cards, 988 business cards, and water bottles, while Liz provided information on upcoming nutrition and health courses and healthy recipes.

MU Extension field and campus faculty attended the 3rd Annual Veterans Resource Fair hosted by the CCUA with sponsorship from the Wounded Warrior Project. This FREE event featured local employers looking to recruit, community resources, social organizations, extension programs, and activity groups for veterans and their families. Debi Kelly, field specialist in horticulture, Adauto Rocha, assistant Extension professor and, Karen Funkenbusch, director Missouri AgrAbility Project, all from MU Extension, as well



as veteran volunteer Eric Work facilitated questions and handed out resources for MO AgrAbility on accessible beekeeping, Heroes to Hives Missouri Chapter, farm and ranch stress, suicide prevention, farm safety, and other education-based agricultural materials for farmers with disabilities, socially disadvantaged, and beginning veteran farmers and their families.



Jenna Korff is wrapping up her internship with Missouri AgrAbility at the University of Missouri Extension. A student at the University of Missouri in Columbia, Jenna is working toward a degree in health sciences with an emphasis in rehabilitation science, and minoring in human development and family science. Her Missouri AgrAbility internship project includes assisting with onsite farmstead assessments, collecting and entering demographic client data, and designing three education-based resources for client farmers and their families. Her final resources will be shared in the August AgrAbility e-Note.

Submitted by Tina Edholm, Eric Work, Jenna Korff, Susan Jaster, and Karen Funkenbusch

Missouri AgrAbility marketing and networking activities during June 2023 included:

- Sponsorship recognition at the BIA-MO Survivor and Family Seminar - Western Missouri on June 3 in Kansas City with attendance by 75 AgrAbility clients.
- An exhibit during the Missouri Rehabilitation Association Conference with visits by 200 vocational, rehabilitation, agricultural, and other professionals between June 5 and 7.
- Being a featured sponsor at the Brain Injury Association of Missouri One-Day Regional Camps in Western Missouri on June 24, and Southwest Missouri on June 27 with a combined participation of 100 survivors of

brain injury and their family members.

- Missouri AgrAbility being discussed during the BIA-MO Networking Coffee for Professionals on June 20 as a resource for farmers receiving rehabilitative care at Southwest Missouri hospitals, community-based service providers, and Missouri Vocational Rehabilitation. This discussion included nine professionals in fields of employment services, vocational counseling, physical therapy, service coordination, legal services, meditation training, agriculture, and brain injury.
- The sharing of Missouri AgrAbility information with 14 individuals receiving BIA-MO community resource services for the first time.

Submitted by Maureen Cunningham

July 2023

Nebraska

Due to a lack of available funding support, the Nebraska AgrAbility team advocated for legislative funding for assistive technology for farmers and ranchers with disabilities. With the support of the Nebraska Farm Bureau, a bill was drafted and presented to the state legislature. The bill passed, making funds available for rural Nebraskans for a two-year term. Nebraska AgrAbility also learned the two-year legislative proposal was signed by the governor, extending funding availability through 2025.

To access the funding, AgrAbility clients complete an application process and, if approved, participate in a cost-share for their item(s), which stretches the dollars for maximum impact. It is amazing to hear farmers tell of their appreciation and how the pieces of equipment have changed their lives!

Staff look forward to assisting farmers and ranchers with disabilities and finding the perfect piece of assistive technology to help them overcome their limitations and remain active in their agricultural profession and community.

Submitted by Soni Cochran

July 2023

North Carolina



On June 15, 2023, at the NC A&T SU Small Farm Field Day, NC AgrAbility participated as a poster presenter, exhibitor, and attendee. The poster presentation was titled "Behavioral Change as a Key to Reducing Injuries in The Ag Workplace". The NC AgrAbility manager was able to reach the large community, make connections, and invite farmers to refer themselves to the program or recommend the program to family and friends. One hundred and seventeen attended the event.



Submitted by Beatriz (Betty) Rodriguez

July 2023

Ohio

Ohio AgrAbility Disability Services Coordinator Laura Akgerman exhibited at the National Amish Handicap Gathering in Berlin, Ohio, June 2 - 3. The event was attended by over 300 people from across the Midwest and South. Attendees were especially interested in the ergonomic garden tools which were on display, and appreciated the NAP booklets on gardening and farming with Arthritis, and the Plain Facts about Arthritis booklet.



Submitted by Laura Akgerman

July 2023

Pennsylvania



It's sum, sum, summertime! The corn is more than knee high across the state and farmers have settled into the season. The AgrAbility PA team has focused on behind-the-scenes client services - working with a wide range of new clients, farm types, and disabilities. A large part of this work is creating continuity and relationships with the state's OVR staff, occupational therapists, and clients and their families. AgrAbility PA staff are prepping for summer events, including Ag Progress Days (which is a multi-day outdoor agricultural expo) and a workshop training for the state's OVR staff.

AgrAbility PA staff members have been out and about across the state:

- Linda Fetzer presented ag safety strategies for farm visits and highlighted AgrAbility services in a presentation to conservation district staff coordinated by the Penn State Extension agronomy team.
- Kendra Martin presented to farmers, who were mostly Veterans, at Rodale Institute's annual summer training program for veterans in agriculture.
- Abbie Spackman exhibited and shared information on agricultural assistive technology and worksite assessments to attendees at the 2023 Community and Public Health Conference sponsored by the Pennsylvania Office of Rural Health.
- Kendra Martin has been on the higher education circuit presenting to students and faculty at occupational therapy programs across the state, including Central Penn College and Temple University.



The PA team also created new banners to use when exhibiting at outreach events. The farmer silhouettes stand about 5ft. tall and feature a male and female with an open-ended question. The canvases will allow staff to point out pain points, discuss assistive technology, and engage in conversations on how AgrAbility assists farmers and ag workers with a disability or health condition. Staff are looking forward to displaying them at upcoming events!

Submitted by Kendra Martin

July 2023

Tennessee

STAR Center's statewide assistive technology (AT) team are dedicated experts who revolutionize accessibility and empowerment through cutting-edge assistive technology. From innovative devices to personalized solutions, they are there to empower individuals with disabilities and unlock new possibilities. The STAR Center AT team plays a vital role in working with TN AgrAbility's farmers through farm visits and assessments for TN Vocational Rehabilitation. This past month, Lindsey Wilkerson, assistive technology specialist, made her first TN AgrAbility farm visit to Marshall County. Learn more about their incredible work by visiting Star-center.org/technology.



Memphis Botanical Gardens welcomed 21 service providers, therapists, teachers, and others involved in therapeutic programming to the Horticultural Therapy Workshop: Healing through Horticultural Therapy, June 8-9. Presenters Douglas Airhart, Ph.D., HTR, professor at Tennessee Tech University; Derrick Stowell, Ph.D., CTRS, HTR, adjunct assistant professor at UT Knoxville; Laurie Williams with Memphis Botanical Gardens, and Joetta T. White, TN AgrAbility, introduced topics related to horticultural therapy, starting a therapy program, integration with current programming, accessibility / adaptation for special needs, propagation, basic plant care techniques, and the TN AgrAbility program. The group toured the Sensory Garden where they were able to touch/smell the plants and hear the sounds in the garden. Quote from an attendee: "I had never thought about how a plant that was root-bound and trying to escape could relate to 'stuff' going on in someone's life." Funding to support veterans attending this workshop was provided by a collaboration between TN AgrAbility Project, FrontLine Gardens, and University of Tennessee Gardens.

Staff are constantly amazed at the servant hearts of Stephanie and Michael Trost, TN AgrAbility farmers with Frontline Gardens who keep spreading hope and purpose with one raised garden bed at a time. (Read more about them [HERE](#).) This month they drove 1,300 miles to Illinois to explore opportunities for future partnerships in other AgrAbility states. Stephanie says, "At Frontline Gardens, we work with the therapist to incorporate the gardening process into the therapy program. We build a custom-built raised bed garden at their residence. We supply the soil, first plantings, and gardening assistance. Therapy is always about moving forward. It's not always easy, but you have to keep trying. One day, you will find the one that works for you and heals your soul. Failure is not the opposite of success, it's a part of success. Failure is not a loss. It's a gain. You learn; you change; you grow. "

STAR Center and TN AgrAbility teamed up to introduce assistive technology tools to 31 Tennessee State University occupational therapy students. Only one out of 31 students had any agriculture background. Some students were able to experience certain physical and learning challenges during the presentation and tried to maneuver farming tasks such as using a hammer and nail with only one limb and reading instructions by someone with Dyslexia. Learning about new apps and devices for taking notes, reading



labels, and a tool that says, "Your coffee cup is full", were eye opening. Occupational therapists play a vital role when it comes to getting the farmer back on the farm after an accident or illness that leaves him/her with a disability. Four TSU OT students will be working with TN AgrAbility for their summer field work.



Congratulations to Charley Jordan, TN AgrAbility farmer veteran. He was elected in June as the new director at large for the [American Horticulture Therapy Association](#) (AHTA). Charley continues to keep expanding his therapeutic horticulture activities through his flower workshops at Steven A. Cohen Military Family Clinic. He has a passion for raising flowers and working with veterans and their families using the healing

power of flowers.

Supporting farmers and rural communities is a true passion of those who have a sincere interest in a vibrant agriculture economy. Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) and Question Persuade Refer (QPR) courses are specifically designed for rural community members. Training courses are offered to veterans and those serving veterans. Learn more about these opportunities by visiting the SAgE network at <https://www.farmandranchstress.com/training>. Trainings are offered with in-person and virtual options. The Farmer Veteran Coalition started the Farmer Veteran Coalition Mental Health Awareness Project by offering FREE virtual QPR suicide prevention training to FVC members, their families, and supporters in FVC Region II - Appalachia - Kentucky, North Carolina, Tennessee, West Virginia, and Virginia, on June 27, 2023. For many people, QPR is a very accessible way to receive an introduction to suicide prevention and learn to notice the first signs of stress in members of the farming community.

Submitted by Tennessee AgrAbility Project

July 2023

Washington

Alyssa Wade also attended field days at the WSU (Washington State University) Lind Dryland Research Station in Lind, WA, on June 15th, and at the Wilke Research and Extension Farm in Davenport, WA, on June 29th. Both events combined had close to 300 attendees, and Alyssa had a full setup of AgrAbility and farm stress information available. While at Wilke, she was able to get farmers to complete an anonymous questionnaire rating their current stressors, which will help create resources and programming to meet their needs accordingly.

Emily Whittier also presented on June 29th at the 2023 WSU Variety Trials in Bickleton, WA. The presentation expanded on the AgrAbility overview and showed attendees how to navigate the National AgrAbility Toolbox. Staff also gathered farmer feedback on potential new AT for their lending library and provided helpful guidance on what they would and would not be interested in.

Debbie Fredricks, Washington AgrAbility co-coordinator, has also had a busy month. She met with the Pacific County Extension office to share more about AgrAbility with them and set up plans to table together at their fair. She met with the Highland Neighborhood Association and the Cowlitz Tribal Recovery office to introduce AgrAbility as well.

Submitted by Alyssa Wade

July 2023

AgrAbility for Africa



Thanks to all who attended the AgrAbility for Africa training workshop in Entebbe, Uganda. Staff hope that everyone had an enjoyable and educational time. AgrAbility for Africa looks forward to continued participation in the 2024 event. Staff continue to welcome thoughts and suggestions that will help improve the 2024 workshop.

Feedback from conversations and surveys during and after the June 2023 inaugural AgrAbility for Africa training workshop points to low sensitivity in matters of disabilities across Africa, weaknesses in communication and responses to concerns and information requests by persons with disabilities - even within organizations in the disabilities space and the governments - and a low level of assistive technology innovation and rehabilitation interventions across the continent at all institutional levels.

Responding to these gaps, AgrAbility for Africa staff are engaging different educational institutes, NGOs, and local and central governments; highlighting the findings and exploring new ways to jointly find solutions. Among the solutions that AgrAbility for Africa would like to propose is the establishment of an African low-tech skill training center and the development of a disability-sensitive training curriculum that can be adopted across the continent to enhance inclusion.

Submitted by Mutumba Faisal

July 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 West TN Beginning Farmer Field Day
Dates July 20, 2023
City, State Trenton, Tennessee
Contact Info/Web link Joetta T White: 731-855-7656 jwhit102@utk.edu

Name BARN: Farm Dinner Theater Facilitator Training
Dates July 24 - 25, 2023
City, State Lexington, Kentucky
Contact Info/Web link Laura Weddle at 859.257.7772 or laura.weddle@uky.edu
https://uky.az1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_6Khb2x5Xloig0Vo

Name Farm Science Review
Dates September 19-21, 2023
City, State London, Ohio
Contact Info/Web link <https://fsr.osu.edu/>

Name World Dairy Expo
Dates October 1-6, 2023
City, State Madison, Wisconsin
Contact Info/Web link <https://worlddairyexpo.com/>

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

link

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