

# AgrAbility e·Note

**August 2023**

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

## National AgrAbility Project News

USDA has opened a financial assistance application process for eligible farmers, ranchers, and forest landowners, including those with disabilities, who experienced discrimination in USDA farm lending programs prior to January 2021. National AgrAbility is assisting with public awareness of this program and has established a web page related to it at [www.agrability.org/discrimination](http://www.agrability.org/discrimination). NAP encourages SRAPs to make their clients aware of this program. The application deadline is October 31.

### NTW Updates

- The date and hotel for the 2024 NTW have been chosen! March 25-28 at the [Grand Hyatt Atlanta/Buckhead](#). More information including a link to book hotel rooms at AgrAbility's rate will be out soon.
- The requests for proposals and posters have been issued, so interested parties should start thinking about sessions that they would like to present or people that could be contacted about sessions. Anyone with an idea for a session without knowing who could present it should let Tess McKeel know, and she can survey the planning committee.
- The NAP will again be asking each SRAP to stipend a farmer before allowing any requests for NAP stipends from that state. SRAPs should start reaching out to their local organizations to see if they can help stipend a farmer to attend.
- Anyone who would like to join the NTW planning committee should send an email to Tess at [tmckeel@goodwillfingerlakes.org](mailto:tmckeel@goodwillfingerlakes.org).



The first session of AgrAbility NTW Encore Webinar Series on chronic pain has been archived at [www.agrability.org/training-category/archived](http://www.agrability.org/training-category/archived), and the second session, "Brain Injury: Chronic Health Condition and Management for Farmers" is scheduled for September 13. Register at [www.agrability.org/ntw-encore](http://www.agrability.org/ntw-encore).



Only one month left to reserve a hotel room for the regional workshop, "Malama the Farmer, Caring for Yourself and Each Other," that is taking place at the [Grand Nanihoa Hotel](#) in Hawai'i October 17-18. This workshop is being planned in conjunction with and support from WRASAP and the University of Hawai'i, and will focus on behavioral health resources, assistive technology, preventing injury, and business planning. Room reservations can be made by clicking on the hotel name above. Registration is open. Find more information and the registration link on the NAP website under "Training and Events",

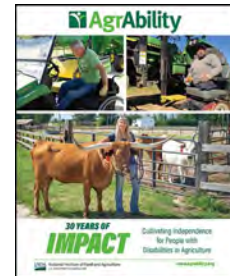
or [click here](#).

The NAP would love to host a regional workshop with anyone interested. Interested parties should please contact Tess [tmckeel@goodwillfingerlakes.org](mailto:tmckeel@goodwillfingerlakes.org) or JoBeth [jbrath@goodwillfingerlakes.org](mailto:jbrath@goodwillfingerlakes.org) for more information.

AgrAbility Zoom discussion: "Worksite assessment tools: what are you using, and what is needed?" on Wednesday, September 6 at 3:00 p.m. EDT. Details to be emailed soon.

The National AgrAbility team recently received three Blue Ribbon Awards in the Educational Aids Blue Ribbon Awards Competition sponsored by the American Society of Agricultural and Biological Engineers:

- *AgrAbility: 30 Years of Impact* (long publications category)
- [www.agrability.org](http://www.agrability.org) website (websites category)
- "Ned Stoller: Agricultural Assistive Technology" (video, stand-alone electronic media category)



## Toolbox Spotlight



A [Tiltable Horizontal Beehive](#) is designed to enable beekeepers, including wheelchair users, to access the hive without having to lift and move the hive boxes. One unlatches the peg at each end, pushes on the edge of the hive to tilt it toward him/her, then re-inserts the pegs to hold the hive in that tilted position. This allows the user to securely work on the honey frames. The lid has safety cables that hold it open while the hive is tilted.

## State and Regional AgrAbility Project News

### Alaska

Staff from Assistive Technology of Alaska (ATLA) represented Alaska AgrAbility at the Disability Pride Celebration at the Delany Park Strip in Anchorage, Alaska. Vendors from a variety of disability support organizations across the state were present. [More](#)

As we all know, fair season is upon us. Art Nash, PI, and Debu Misra, co-PI, were sharing AgrAbility information at the Tanana Valley State Fair in Fairbanks and were interviewed by KTVF TV where they presented a tool that could be used for modified gardening. [More](#)

Debu attended the 2023 Annual International Meeting of the American Society of Agricultural and Biological Engineers (ASABE). The meeting was held in Omaha, Nebraska, July 9-12. [More](#)

### Colorado

Candiss Leathers, M.A., VRT, AgrAbility project manager and Ashley Buchanan, M.A. Ed/SPE, M. Ext. Ed., rural rehabilitation specialist, completed a four-day training course Agricultural Health and Safety for Medical and Safety Professionals through the University of Nebraska Medical Center.

### Illinois



Illinois AgrAbility presented three times at the Ewing Agronomy Field Day in southern IL on July 27. Approximately 50 farmers were in attendance.

The Illinois AgrAbility project developed and finalized their public website. It can be viewed here: <https://extension.illinois.edu/agrability>.

The project is gearing up to host the health and safety tent at the Farm Progress Show in Decatur, IL, on August 29-31. They will be hosting 14 organizations in their tent, and each is providing demonstrations, resources, and activities related to agriculture, public health, veterans, ag safety, etc. [More](#)

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## Indiana

Indiana AgrAbility partnered with Easterseals Crossroads for Ability Awareness Day at the Indiana State Fair on Sunday, July 30. Staff and volunteers welcomed thousands of fairgoers, showing everyone what assistive technology means on the farm or in the garden.



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## Maine



Boots-2-Bushels sponsored two on-farm visits that focused on no-till practices and small-scale farming with 20 participants. Staff provided presentations on best practices for farming ergonomics.

Maine AgrAbility's OTD student wrote and had an article on carpal tunnel syndrome published in the Summer 2023 edition of [The Logger's Voice](#).

See page 37.

AgrAbility's OTD student earned his doctorate after presenting the results of his capstone project on "Exploring a New Pain Tool for Maine Commercial Farmers." The new pain evaluation tool was developed by Maine AgrAbility and the study found that this tool helped farmers recognize and be more aware of their physical pain.



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## Missouri

Missouri AgrAbility focused its social media efforts on program promotion, opportunities and resources for farmers, and health, safety, and wellness tips.

Faculty from Missouri AgrAbility in collaboration with MU Psychology and University of Missouri Extension launched National Institutes of Health's (NIH) R21 survey to understand mental health and social connections among Missouri farmers, ranchers, farmworkers, agricultural workers, and rural residents. Funding was provided by the National Institute of Minority Health and Health Disparities (Grant ID #R21MD017029).



Lincoln University Farm Outreach Worker Susan Jaster demonstrated the Jessup Wagon at the Carver Farm field day in Jefferson City, MO. Attendees included small farmers from around the state of Missouri, university employees, and community members.

Lincoln University Farm Outreach Worker Mary Bolling collaborated with the veterans' group "The Mission Continues" to build two wheelchair accessible garden beds for the community garden at the African Methodist Church in Herculaneum, MO. Next steps for the project include accessible pathways to

the garden beds.



Maureen Cunningham with the Brain Injury Association of Missouri (BIA-MO) and Missouri AgrAbility, co-PI, provided an in-service for therapy staff at Select Specialty Hospital in Springfield. [More](#)

BIA-MO replenished the supply of brain injury resource kits to Ozark Neuro Rehab Center in Springfield and the Rehab Institute of St. Louis to provide information and connect farmers and ranchers to services. [More](#)

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## Nebraska



John Davis represented Nebraska AgrAbility at the Graze Master Agriculture Community Workshop in Seward, Nebraska, June 28-29. The meeting focused on new and creative approaches to reducing chemical and nutrient inputs, increasing farm profitability, soil health, soil/water/feed testing, biological ag inputs, and rotational grazing.

In addition, several speakers addressed mental health in the farming community - a subject very important to the AgrAbility effort. Attention to this subject provided the opportunity for Josh to let those in attendance know of Nebraska AgrAbility's support of needs related to this topic.

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## New Mexico

New Mexico AgrAbility Project (NMAP) will meet with the [New Mexico Farm and Ranch Heritage Museum](#) to talk about a possible future display of assistive technology for farmers and ranchers. The museum, located in Las Cruces, NM, is visited by people from all over the United States.

NMAP has been accepted as a speaker at the NM Occupational Therapy Association conference on August 18 and for the 43rd NM Conference on Aging on September 13. Staff look forward to educating rehabilitation professionals and seniors across the state about AgrAbility.

NMTAP and UNM are working to develop curricula to allow 3D printing of adaptive aids at the NMTAP program.

Eight farm apprentices continue to learn about possibilities for their own farming at Mandy's Farm (NMAP's partner). Mandy's Farm has been participating in environmental justice events.

AgrAbility was present at NM State University's field day on August 1.

Eight apprentices continued regular attendance to the program, managing weeds, building infrastructure improvements, and beginning the harvest season: [More](#)

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## North Carolina

NC AgrAbility participated at the South Carolina State University, Life Project, and AgrAbility Farming and Assistive Technology Workshop held on July 13-14 in Elloree, SC. The event was well-attended by over 90 people, including staff, collaborators, partners, farmers, and other stakeholders. [More](#)





On July 14, NC AgrAbility participated as an exhibitor at the CEFS Small Farm Unit Demonstration and Field Day event in Goldsboro, NC. James Fry, NC AgrAbility field agent, had the opportunity to share with over 130 attendees who learned about the NC AgrAbility services.

Syngenta employees received a webinar presentation by Betty Rodriguez, NC AgrAbility manager, Christey Kirk, NC assistive technology program, and Suzanne Ramsey, NC farmer. The webinar was entitled "Conscious Conversations: Exploring Diverse Ability in Ag and Accessible Technology with AgrAbility." [More](#)

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## Ohio

Ohio AgrAbility staff continue to work with farmers and collaborate with colleagues and stakeholders to raise awareness of Ohio AgrAbility services and activities, and to create resources and educational opportunities throughout Ohio.

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## Pennsylvania

AgrAbility PA had a great July! Highlights included presentations from Project Director Suzanna Windon on stress management and mentoring for community leadership, outreach in collaboration with Penn State Ag Safety and Health, and outreach to Amish populations.

On July 10th, Linda Fetzer presented ag safety, tractor certification, and AgrAbility to ag educators at the PA Association of Ag Educator's Summer Institute. And on July 22nd, she participated in the Cumberland County Amish Safety Day where she presented PTO safety and also talked about AgrAbility.

Dr. Suzanna Windon spent much of July traveling and providing presentations in collaboration with her grad students. Topics included "Managing Stress on the Farm" and "Mentoring for Innovative and Inclusive Community Leadership" with information on AgrAbility provided in both topics.

Abbie Spackman and Linda Fetzer created educational bags with AgrAbility and ag safety and health information and provided bags to members of the plain community, primarily Amish, during a day of outreach.

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## South Carolina

This month, the AgrAbility in South Carolina team held a workshop with participants from the NAP and those from the LIFE Project. Staff were able to describe AgrAbility and how they can offer services to the participating farmers in the area. [More](#)

The AgrAbility team will continue working with their nonprofit, Able SC, in their commitment to the state in offering the AgrAbility program. One of the team's goals was to meet with assistive technology and vocational rehabilitation education specialists to develop a plan to provide farmers in the state with resources to benefit their commitment to agriculture. [More](#)

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## Tennessee

The 2023 West Tennessee Beginning Farmers Field Day (WTBFFD) was hosted by TN AgrAbility, Gibson County UT TSU Extension, UT Center of Farm Management,

Gibson County Natural Resources Conservation Service, Gibson County Soil & Water Conservation District, and Gibson County Farm Service Agency. [More](#)



TN AgrAbility partnered with Farmer Veteran Coalition of TN and networked with over 300 cattle farmers at the 2023 TN Cattlemen's Association summer meeting, "Stockmen in the Smokies." TNAP and Dameon Berry, TN AgrAbility farmer veteran, introduced Kate Bowen, with national Farmer Veteran Coalition (FVC), to some of their TN friends. [More](#)

Eileen Legault, TN AgrAbility area specialist, and Egla Delvo-Lopez, UT Extension SAgE coordinator, attended the B.A.R.N.: Farm Dinner Theater Facilitator Training in Lexington, KY. They highly recommend the training and learned new ways to "Bring Awareness Right Now" at the mental health and wellbeing workshop hosted by University of KY and Southern Ag Exchange Network. [More](#)

Charley Jordan, TN farmer veteran with [Jordanfarmstn](#), spoke to Tennessee State University occupational therapy students about the many programs he and his farm offer to the public, veterans, and soon-to-be veterans. One program mentioned was the KY AgVets Boots to Agriculture Internship. [More](#)



The STAR Center and TNAP recognized the ADA's 33rd Anniversary! Thirty-three years ago, on July 26, 1990, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) was signed into law. This Historic civil rights law protects the rights of people with disabilities. Check this link out for more information: <https://adata.org/learn-about-ada>.

Did you know that gardening has many health benefits? To learn more, read the new UT Extension publication "[Therapeutic Benefits of Gardening and Accessible Garden Design](#)". Dr. Derrick Stowell, UT Gardens Education and Horticultural Therapy Program administrator and TN AgrAbility partner, and two interns assisted with the publication.



## Texas



Texas AgrAbility presented to over 25 military veterans and beginning farmers and ranchers at the BattleGround to Breaking Ground Introduction to Agriculture Bootcamp. Participants were provided information on working with Texas AgrAbility through worksite assessments, farm startups, and assistive technology recommendations.

Texas AgrAbility met with partners to explore offering self-employment services through Vocational Rehabilitation to clients wanting to start their agricultural operations. These services would provide AgrAbility clients with support through developing self-employment goals and feasibility studies.

Texas AgrAbility staff attended the Texas A&M Beef Cattle Short Course to network with cattle producers and agriculture service providers.

Texas AgrAbility delivered a client impact survey to all clients to gauge services provided, economic impact, and client satisfaction. Results of the survey will be compiled into a summary and provided to clients and stakeholders.

## Utah

The AgrAbility of Utah staff was excited to present at the FFA Chapter Officer Leadership Trainings in Orem, Utah, on July 11. The training was attended by over 200 FFA students.

On July 13, AgrAbility staff presented at the USU Extension Irrigated Field Days event. The event was attended by over 40 farmers and ranchers and topics included pasture weed management, electric fences, and pasture fertility options.

The AgrAbility staff set up a booth and was able to visit with many of the participants at the Central States Wool Growers Summer Conference in Heber City, Utah, on July 31. Utah ranks fifth in the nation in sheep production.

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## Virginia

During the month of July, Virginia AgrAbility presented to multiple groups representing a variety of farmers and farm workers. Field staff conducted a seminar for 25 students in attendance at Virginia Governor's School for Agriculture, located on the campus of Virginia Tech. [More](#)

AgrAbility Virginia is currently working with 32 open farmer client cases at various levels of engagement and need, including a farmer with multiple sclerosis with whom staff is looking into securing automatic gate openers for the beef operation in collaboration with Easterseals UCP.

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## Washington

The Washington AgrAbility team has had several successful site visits this month and are beginning to attend fairs across the state to share AgrAbility and farm stress resources.

Emily Whittier and Alyssa Wade, Washington AgrAbility co-coordinators, spent July preparing for fairs and conference season as well as working with WSU (Washington State University) evaluator Season Horde to strategize for engaging and awareness-building displays and techniques.

Emily and Alyssa also attended the 13th annual agricultural health and safety course held by AgHealth Central States Center for Agricultural Safety and Health where they learned about many issues that may affect AgrAbility clients and how to help prevent and alleviate them.

Emily Whittier worked with WA AgrAbility occupational therapist Kyrstin Szewczyk, Washington Assistive Technology Act Program specialist Curt Johnson, and local specialists to create a list of all-terrain wheelchairs to suit the needs a local farmer was searching for.

Don McMoran, Washington AgrAbility program director; Deb Eidsness, Washington AgrAbility co-coordinator; Kyrstin Szewczyk; Amber Beane web marketing support, WSU Skagit County Extension; and Piper, WSU Skagit County Extension intern went on a site visit to assess three new clients who all reside on a sheep operation. [More](#)



Debbie Fredricks, Washington AgrAbility co-coordinator, attended a WSU Zoom presentation on working with Native American audiences and toured four farms in Lewis County.

Debbie also did a site visit for a visually impaired farmer whom she is continuing to work with and followed up with two veteran farmers on a post-site visit to give them mental health therapy vouchers and suggestions on assistive technology options.

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## Wisconsin



AgrAbility of Wisconsin partnered with Wisconsin's Assistive Technology Act program, WisTech, for the 2023 Farm Technology Days show, July 18-20 in Baraboo, WI. Both organizations highlighted AT for home and farm and welcomed visitors from across the state. Wisconsin Secretary of Agriculture Randy Romanski and Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development Secretary-designee Amy Pechacek stopped by the AgrAbility booth for a check-in. It was a dusty and dry but successful show.

AgrAbility of Wisconsin staff have been busy getting to summer field days, safety events, and outreach events, including hosting a Neighbor-to-Neighbor event on August 8. Staff will be in front of FFA alumni, Kiwanis, Lions Club, and AGR groups, as well as partnering with other industry groups to present to farmers. Busy summer schedule!

### International AgrAbility Network News

## AgrAbility for Africa

Feedback from farmers affected by a disability who attended the first AgrAbility for Africa training workshop brings to the fore the gaps that exist in the availability of affordable low-tech assistive technologies. There is a need for innovative craftsmanship and repair of assistive technologies commensurate with local wages... [More](#)



Following the success of the June 2023 inaugural AgrAbility for Africa training workshop, the AgrAbility for Africa staff have recorded increased inquiries and requests for collaborations from different social groups, and overall general awareness of the activities, services, and programs of AgrAbility for Africa that are supporting farmers with disabilities in rural Africa.

### Staff Changes and Recognition

## Colorado



Colorado AgrAbility is proud to announce three regional behavioral health Extension specialists! All three specialists are experienced behavioral health providers with a dedication to serving Colorado's rural and agricultural populations. They will work to expand and improve behavioral health support, stress management, and suicide prevention for farmers, ranchers, ag-workers, and their families across Colorado. Photo from L to R: Julie Elliott, M.A. LPC (Western Region), Jim Kuemmerle, MSW, BCD, LCSW (Eastern Region), and Kirsten Wulfsberg, LPC (Mountain Region).

## Nebraska

Welcome Jada Ruff to Nebraska AgrAbility. She is a new Nebraska Extension educator focused on food, nutrition, and health. Jada serves the Buffalo County area which includes the Kearney community. She is a recent graduate of the University of Nebraska-Kearney where she earned her bachelor's degree in



exercise science and master's degree in public communication. Jada shares, "I am excited about the opportunity to work with AgrAbility as it provides me the opportunity to meet new people and collaborate with others. I am also excited to help the team with social media and spread the word about AgrAbility and how it can help many farmers, ranchers, and their families." Welcome Jada!



## Tennessee



Congratulations to Stephanie Brewer Cook who partnered with TN AgrAbility in 1995 and continues to promote TN AgrAbility, for receiving a special Lifetime Award from the [disABILITY Resource Center](#) at their Americans with Disability Act (ADA) Anniversary Celebration luncheon celebrating 33 years since the act's creation. [More](#)

## Texas

Elizabeth "Ellie" Gandara-Castillo was honored for her service to the project. Ellie has worked with Texas AgrAbility as a program coordinator for migrant and seasonal farmworkers for the past 4 years. We would like to thank her for her time and dedication to Texas AgrAbility and the migrant and Hispanic farmworker population. We wish Ellie the best of luck in her future endeavors.



### AgrAbility in the News

Click titles below for news stories featuring AgrAbility projects .

- [Financial Assistance Application Process Opens for USDA Farm Loan Borrowers Who Have Faced Discrimination](#) (National AgrAbility Project)
- [Congresswoman Caraveo Announces Slate of Bipartisan Bills Supporting Rural Coloradans](#) (Colorado AgrAbility Project)
- [Illinois AgrAbility ready to serve farmers across the state](#) (Illinois AgrAbility Unlimited)
- [ADA Is Part Of The DNA Of UF/IFAS](#) (Florida AgrAbility Project)
- [Rep. Neguse introduces bill to improve mental health care for farmers and ranchers](#) (Colorado AgrAbility Project)

### Other News

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

- [Talking Total Farmer Health Podcast](#)  
Rural Telehealth - Part 2 of 2  
Episode 22 • 1st August 2023 • AgriSafe Talking Total Farmer Health • AgriSafe
- What do you know about power wagons? The following websites provide information about power wagons you might want to consider for an agroforestry/permaculture farm: [More](#)
- [USDA Invests in Research, Extension and Education at 1890 Land-grant Universities](#)
- [Farm Workers Welcome Reintroduction of Bipartisan Farm Workforce Modernization Act](#)
- [Climate Change Ratchets up the Stress on Farmworkers on the Front Lines of a Warming Earth](#)
- [Farm Aid Festival Returns to Indiana Sept. 23](#)
- [Biden-Harris Administration Helps Expand Access to Rural Health Care](#)
- [Sexual violence is a pervasive threat for female farm workers – here's how the US](#)

[could reduce their risk](#)

- [Afghan refugees forge 'a path forward' in Virginia sheep farming](#)
- [U.S. Specialty Crop Growers Welcome Legislation Supporting Domestic Marketing and Farming Efficiencies](#)

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## UpcomingEvents

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

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

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**August 2023**

## **Alaska**

Staff from Assistive Technology of Alaska (ATLA) represented Alaska AgrAbility at the Disability Pride Celebration at the Delany Park Strip in Anchorage, Alaska. Vendors from a variety of disability support organizations across the state were present. Additionally, ATLA Staff traveled to Homer, Alaska, and met with clients and contacts to provide assistive technology assessments and share about the program.

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As we all know, fair season is upon us. Art Nash, PI, and Debu Misra, co-PI, were sharing AgrAbility information at the Tanana Valley State Fair in Fairbanks and were interviewed by KTVF TV where they presented a tool that could be used for modified gardening. Debu also attended the Deltana Fair in Delta Junction in late July to share program information and provided public outreach.

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Debu attended the 2023 Annual International Meeting of the American Society of Agricultural and Biological Engineers (ASABE). The meeting was held in Omaha, Nebraska, July 9-12. The meeting intends to expand awareness of current industry trends, promote and acknowledge innovations in design and technology, and provide opportunities for professional development - all with a focus on the economic, political, and societal impacts facing the industry. During the meeting, Debu interacted with several ASABE members about AKAgrAbility and received positive responses from them all. Many expressed their curiosity about the level of agricultural practices in Alaska, which opened the door for more broad discussion on AgrAbility. Debu shared some AKAgrAbility notes with those who were interested. Some of them had questions about the fishing and lumber industry, but those were after they had gone through the notes he shared. The interactions provided an opportunity to showcase and highlight AgrAbility to an interested audience.

Submitted by DeShana York

**August 2023**

## **Colorado**

Candiss Leathers, M.A., VRT, AgrAbility project manager and Ashley Buchanan, M.A. Ed/SPE, M. Ext. Ed., rural rehabilitation specialist, completed a four-day training course Agricultural Health and Safety for Medical and Safety Professionals through the University of Nebraska Medical Center.

This accredited continuing education activity is designed for professionals who work with or have an interest in agricultural health and safety including physicians, nurses, emergency medical services professionals, physician assistants, health educators, advanced practice nurses, ag extension, migrant health clinicians, physical therapists, insurance specialists, veterinarians, and safety professionals. This course was designed to examine key health and safety issues specific to rural and agricultural workers.

Submitted by Ellis Vidmar

**August 2023**

## **Illinois**

The project is gearing up to host the health and safety tent at the Farm Progress Show in Decatur, IL, on August 29-31. They will be hosting 14 organizations in their tent, and each is providing demonstrations, resources, and activities related to agriculture, public health, veterans, ag safety, etc. The tent will also be offering several opportunities for free health screenings including blood pressure testing, blood glucose screening, hearing & vision checks, and more.

Submitted by Haley Jones

**August 2023**

## **Missouri**

Maureen Cunningham with the Brain Injury Association of Missouri (BIA-MO) and Missouri AgrAbility, co-PI, provided an in-service for therapy staff at Select Specialty Hospital in Springfield. This education provided information about Missouri AgrAbility for farmers and ranchers receiving care at that facility. Brain injury resource kits were provided for distribution to current and future AgrAbility clients.

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BIA-MO replenished the supply of brain injury resource kits to Ozark Neuro Rehab Center in Springfield and the Rehab Institute of St. Louis to provide information and connect farmers and ranchers to services. In addition, Missouri AgrAbility and BIA-MO, partners of Missouri Vocational Rehabilitation and DHSS Adult Brain Injury Program, are distributing brain injury resource kits to service providers in eastern and southeastern Missouri to support Missouri AgrAbility clients with brain injury.

Submitted by: Maureen Cunningham

**August 2023**

## **New Mexico**

Eight apprentices continued regular attendance to the program, managing weeds, building infrastructure improvements, and beginning the harvest season:

- continued NMSU ICAN cooking classes every third Thursday, where apprentices are sharpening their knife skills and learning food preservation techniques
- developed a weed identification matching card game
- installed 400 row feet of perennial onions
- began intensively grazing a section of a field with 16 goats.

Submitted by New Mexico AgrAbility Project

August 2023

## North Carolina



NC AgrAbility participated at the South Carolina State University, Life Project, and AgrAbility Farming and Assistive Technology Workshop held on July 13-14 in Elloree, SC. The event was well-attended by over 90 people, including staff, collaborators, partners, farmers, and other stakeholders.



Suzanne Ramsey and Jean Steverson, NC farmers, participated on the farmer panel session, Betty Rodriguez participated as a speaker, and Christey Kirk from NCATP joined as attendee.

Syngenta employees received a webinar presentation by Betty Rodriguez, NC AgrAbility manager, Christey Kirk, NC assistive technology program, and Suzanne Ramsey, NC farmer. The webinar was entitled "Conscious Conversations: Exploring Diverse Ability in Ag and Accessible Technology with AgrAbility." This event was attended by 167 persons, and it was recorded and shared on their SharePoint platform for future access. The audience was very grateful to learn of the services the program provides.

Submitted by North Carolina AgrAbility



**August 2023**

## **South Carolina**

This month, the AgrAbility in South Carolina team held a workshop with participants from the NAP and those from the LIFE Project. Staff were able to describe AgrAbility and how they can offer services to the participating farmers in the area. South Carolina State and those from Clemson and Able SC, who make up the South Carolina AgrAbility team, hosted the event.

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The AgrAbility team will continue working with their nonprofit, Able SC, in their commitment to the state in offering the AgrAbility program. One of the team's goals was to meet with assistive technology and vocational rehabilitation education specialists to develop a plan to provide farmers in the state with resources to benefit their commitment to agriculture. The team will continue to cross-educate each other on the benefits of disability services offered around the state to maintain the quality of agriculture in South Carolina.

Submitted by AgrAbility in South Carolina

August 2023

## Tennessee

The 2023 West Tennessee Beginning Farmers Field Day (WTBFFD) was hosted by TN AgrAbility, Gibson County UT TSU Extension, UT Center of Farm Management, Gibson County Natural Resources Conservation Service, Gibson County Soil & Water Conservation District, and Gibson County Farm Service Agency. The agencies mentioned above, plus STAR Center and Center for Profitable Ag, spoke on various programs that could benefit beginning farmers (farming 10 years or less) and their families. There were 43 beginning farmers present.



TN AgrAbility partnered with Farmer Veteran Coalition of TN and networked with over 300 cattle farmers at the 2023 TN Cattlemen's Association summer meeting, "Stockmen in the Smokies." TNAP and Dameon Berry, TN AgrAbility farmer veteran, introduced Kate Bowen, with national Farmer Veteran Coalition (FVC), to some of their TN friends. Kate is currently working remotely for the FVC from Loudon County, TN. FVC is working with Dairy Grazing Apprenticeship covering tuitions and

providing stipends through the AgVets grant to qualifying veterans. Contact Kate for more information: [kate@farmvetco.org](mailto:kate@farmvetco.org)

Eileen Legault, TN AgrAbility area specialist, and Eglá Delvo-Lopez, UT Extension SAgE coordinator, attended the B.A.R.N.: Farm Dinner Theater Facilitator Training in Lexington, KY. They highly recommend the training and learned new ways to "Bring Awareness Right Now" at the mental health and wellbeing workshop hosted by University of KY and Southern Ag Exchange Network. More plans are being made for future trainings in 2024. Eglá was introduced to Dr. Cheryl Witt and Dale Dobson with KY Raising Hope. The staff was reminded that the most important thing on the farm is you. It wouldn't exist without you, so TN AgrAbility encourages you to take care of yourself mentally and physically. Visit <https://bit.ly/3KkdsJ3> for resources for Kentucky's farmers and their families.

Charley Jordan, TN farmer veteran with [Jordanfarmstn](#), spoke to Tennessee State University occupational therapy students about the many programs he and his farm offer to the public, veterans, and soon-to-be veterans. One program mentioned was the KY AgVets Boots to Agriculture Internship. This program is open to transitioning service members at Fort Campbell in their last six months of service. For more information [CLICK HERE](#).



Submitted by Tennessee AgrAbility Project

## Staff Changes and Recognition

Congratulations to Stephanie Brewer Cook who partnered with TN AgrAbility in 1995 and continues to promote TN AgrAbility, for receiving a special Lifetime Award from the [disABILITY Resource Center](#) at their Americans with Disability Act (ADA) Anniversary Celebration luncheon celebrating 33 years since the



act's creation. In addition to serving as the City's Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Coordinator, Stephanie heads the City's Disability Services Office, which coordinates compliance activities throughout the city and provides accommodations for citizens to attend public meetings as well as for city employees. The Lifetime Spirit of ADA Award honored Stephanie for her advocacy and the huge difference she has made in the community for people with disabilities in the last 25 years. She works diligently to make Knoxville a more accessible city for every resident and visitor. TN AgrAbility is proud of her and grateful for her service. Stephanie has referred farmers with disabilities to TN AgrAbility since she learned about the TNAP in 1995.

Stephanie Cook said, "Today, we celebrate the 33rd anniversary of the signing of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and the 50th anniversary of Section 504 of the Rehab Act. The Disability Resource Center hosted its annual Spirit of the ADA Awards luncheon and gave inaugural 'Jordan R. Hiles Outstanding Achievement in Advocacy' awards to four individuals who have been advocating for many years in this community for more and better access for and true inclusion of people with disabilities. I am honored and humbled to be a recipient, along with friends such as Sandy Booher, Dr. Laura Payne, and Warren Secrest. DRC Executive Director Katherine Moore surprised us with our selection, but she is an amazing advocate for people with disabilities too. She deserves this kind of award. Honestly, I prefer to give credit for any small thing that I may have helped change to all of those people who came before me, who have taught me, supported me, listened to me rant and rave about some injustice and how it's gotta be fixed, heard me go on and on about using affirmative language when talking about people with disabilities, who have heard me brag just a little when we get a big win...I do nothing alone or in a vacuum. I am blessed to have a circle of support that feels miles wide...my sweet husband, my in-laws, my sisters and Mom, my colleagues at the City, the members of City of Knoxville CODI , my right hand Misha Michele Dziubak, and all of the people throughout the city who have included me, asked me for input, pushed back on some wild idea, and have generally given me the space and time to 'move the needle' a bit. I can't name all of those whom I admire or work with or who have mentored me...and I don't have as many pictures of them from today as I would like; but just know that you are part of my circle, and I am happy that you are. Thank you for all you've done and continue to do for me and our city. Tomorrow, we start again. Our work is not yet done."

**August 2023**

## **Virginia**

During the month of July, Virginia AgrAbility presented to multiple groups representing a variety of farmers and farm workers. Field staff conducted a seminar for 25 students in attendance at Virginia Governor's School for Agriculture, located on the campus of Virginia Tech. Additionally, the team attended the Virginia Agriculture Teachers' Conference, a Dairy Expo, a workshop on farming and assistive technology, and a presentation to James Madison University nursing students. Project Director Dr. Niewolny presented a program called "Sustaining a Healthy Mind is a Shepherding BMP" as part of a Virginia Cooperative Extension initiative working with shepherders from Afghanistan who have recently relocated to Northern Virginia.

Submitted by Leslie Lawrence

August 2023

## Washington



Don McMoran, Washington AgrAbility program director; Deb Eidsness, Washington AgrAbility co-coordinator; Kyrstin Szewczyk; Amber Beane web marketing support, WSU Skagit County Extension; and Piper, WSU Skagit County Extension intern went on a



site visit to assess three new clients who all reside on a sheep operation. They spent ample time at their farm assessing their needs and taking pictures and videos to share. They hope to produce many ways to keep them farming and in good health at the same time.



Submitted by Alyssa Wade

August 2023

## Wisconsin



AgrAbility of Wisconsin partnered with Wisconsin's Assistive Technology Act program, WisTech, for the 2023 Farm Technology Days show, July 18-20 in Baraboo, WI. Both organizations highlighted AT for home and farm and welcomed

visitors from across the state. Wisconsin Secretary of Agriculture Randy Romanski and Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development Secretary-designee Amy Pechacek stopped by the AgrAbility booth for a check-in. It was a dusty and dry but successful show.



AgrAbility of Wisconsin staff have been busy getting to summer field days, safety events, and outreach events, including hosting a Neighbor-to-Neighbor event on August 8. Staff will be in front of FFA alumni, Kiwanis, Lions Club, and AGR groups, as well as partnering with other industry groups to present to farmers. Busy summer schedule!

Submitted by Annie Klahn

August 2023

## AgrAbility for Africa

Feedback from farmers affected by a disability who attended the first AgrAbility for Africa training workshop brings to the fore the gaps that exist in the availability of affordable low-tech assistive technologies. There is a need for innovative craftsmanship and repair of assistive technologies commensurate with local wages in the different parts of rural Africa. Responding to concerns, the leadership of AgrAbility for Africa has donated land to house the first Africa assistive technology lab devoted to carrying out capacity development in the production of low-cost assistive technologies and to promoting the technologies in different parts of Uganda and Africa as a whole.



Submitted by Mutumba Faisal

August 2023

## Other News

### What do you know about power wagons?

What do you know about power wagons? The following websites provide information about power wagons you might want to consider for an agroforestry/permaculture farm:

- [Ox models, Attachments, and Other supplies, Absolute Equipment Sales](#)
- [Overland Electric Power Utility Wagon - 13 Cu. Ft. Metal Hopper](#)
- [DR Powerwagon](#)

There are all kinds of power wagons that can carry just about anything around the farm. If it is an agroforestry farm you might want to consider the products being harvested, the size of harvest containers, and their stack-ability, power source such as electric, gas, or diesel, the terrain of the farm, and the strength and ability of the farmer-client. Some of the power wagons can adjust to what you are hauling while some cannot, and some have accessories for certain jobs. Also, some of these power wagons have "ride-on" capability for a strong, limber rider. No PPE safety gear is suggested, but the unit travels at low speeds, under 5 miles per hour. Does that matter? Is the motor loud? Does it have an electric start motor? How long will the batteries last, and are the batteries AGM or lithium? Will the unit operate well in cold/hot climates? Does the unit have "hillsense" for inclines/declines? Does it stop or brake automatically when the throttle is not being controlled? Can you get "no-flat tires"? Exploring the options on power wagons when looking for adaptive technology for AgrAbility clients may be a good idea.

Submitted by Susan Jaster, Missouri AgrAbility Project



August 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** 2023 Farm Progress Show  
**Dates** August 29-31, 2023  
**City, State** Decatur, Illinois  
**Contact Info/Web link** <https://www.farmprogressshow.com/en/home.html>

**Name** Zoonotic Disease and Pregnancy: A Deeper Dive  
**Dates** August 30, 2023 1:00-2:00 p.m. EDT  
**City, State** Webinar Online  
**Contact Info/Web link** <https://www.agrisafe.org/event/webinar-zoonotic-disease-and-pregnancy-a-deeper-dive-4/>

**Name** National Farm Safety & Health Week webinars from AgriSafe  
**Dates** September 18-22, 2023 at 12:00p.m. and 2:00p.m. EDT each day  
**City, State** Webinar Online  
**Contact Info/Web link** <https://files.constantcontact.com/20e75ba9001/36d8d6a3-b510-476d-b1c9-a3dc5350c423.pdf>

**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/>

**link**

**Name** 2023 agrileadHER virtual conference

**Dates** November 1-2, 2023

**City, State** Virtual Event Online

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

**Name** 9th Annual Farmer Veteran Coalition Stakeholders Conference

**Dates** November 12-14, 2023

**City, State** Washington, D.C.

**Contact Info/Web link** <https://tinyurl.com/5ak5v5pr>