



## **UW EXTENSION -- AGRABILITY DECEMBER 2004 UPDATE**

AgrAbility of Wisconsin promotes success in agriculture for individuals with disabilities. In a partnership between UW-Cooperative Extension and Easter Seals Wisconsin, the program assists farmers and farm workers with disabilities or chronic health conditions to continue to farm safely and productively. For more information on AgrAbility's services, call (608) 262-9336, toll-free at 1-800-422-2324, or e-mail [aaw@mailplus.wisc.edu](mailto:aaw@mailplus.wisc.edu).

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### **AGRABILITY GEARING UP FOR A BUSY WINTER/SPRING**

AgrAbility of Wisconsin staff members will be busy after the holiday season. During events, general program information is shared along with examples of simple assistive technology available to help farmers with disabilities perform tasks a little bit easier.

Along with publicizing the program, these shows provide an opportunity for stronger networks to be formed, as AgrAbility staff members are able to meet county extension personnel putting additional names and faces together. County agents planning to attend any of the upcoming listed events are encouraged to stop by AgrAbility's booth on their own or with a local producer to learn more about how AgrAbility can help farmers with disabilities continue in their chosen vocation--agriculture.

#### **PAST EVENTS**

- November 4, 2004 **Assistive Technology & Resource Fair** Hayward
- November 16-19, 2004 **National AgrAbility Workshop** Springfield, IL
- December 3, 2004 **AgrAbility of Wisconsin Advisory Council Meeting** Madison

#### **UPCOMING EVENTS**

- January 19-20, 2005 **27<sup>th</sup> Midwest Farm Show** La Crosse
- January 25-26, 2005 **14<sup>th</sup> Rice Lake Area Farm Show** Rice Lake
- March 1-2, 2005 **42<sup>nd</sup> Eau Claire Farm Show** Eau Claire
- March 5, 2005 **Fond du Lac Agriculture Showcase and Celebration** Fond du Lac
- March 29-31, 2005 **WPS Farm Show** Oshkosh

### **AGRABILITY ADVISORY COUNCIL MEETING**

AgrAbility of Wisconsin holds a yearly advisory council meeting with members from various groups throughout the state and former clients of the program. Meetings consist of a presentation from a former client about the farm operation and what modifications and equipment were added to the farm. The council views data regarding the program and clients from the last grant year and the current year. This data represents percentages of female and male clients, types of agriculture operations, disabilities and other demographic information. The program has served over 1200 clients since beginning in 1991.

During the 2003-2004 grant year, AgrAbility served 124 clients and currently have added 92 new clients. Percentages of female and male clients stay consistent from year to year; last year AgrAbility's client base was 17% female and 83% male. A variety of operations are represented, however over 50% of the operations are dairy farms and livestock farms follow a distant second, averaging about 20%. Back injuries are the number one disability of clients for the state at 19% last year and 23% for the current year, while knee injuries and arthritis follow closely behind.

### **NEWSLETTER ROUTING REQUEST**

Along with the farm shows, AgrAbility's *Plowing Ahead* newsletter, which is distributed throughout Wisconsin quarterly, aids in increasing awareness of the program's unique services. Each issue features a farmer's story, as well as thoughts from program partners and other pertinent information.

The winter issue of the *Plowing Ahead* newsletter features a story of an Auburndale farmer who overcame an ATV accident to continue farming his family's four-generation dairy farm despite his disability. Please look for this newest issue as it will be arriving in early January.

Copies of past newsletters are also available to view and/or download by visiting <http://bse.wisc.edu/agrability> or call (608) 262-9336 for newsletter requests.

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*AgrAbility – Promoting Success in Agriculture for Individuals with Disabilities and Their Families.*  
Visit us at <http://bse.wisc.edu/agrability>.

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