



UW EXTENSION -- AGRABILITY AUGUST 2007 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.

AGRABILITY OF WISCONSIN 101

Since there are always staff changes occurring throughout the state extension offices, the AgrAbility staff feels that it is important to let new staff members know more about us as well as update current staff regarding the details of the AgrAbility program. AgrAbility 101 started with an explanation of the process of signing up for the program. This month will be an explanation of the partnerships, funding and relationships between the organizations.

AgrAbility of Wisconsin's success is dependent upon the strength and success of the partnerships between the organizations. As was stated last month, for the AgrAbility program to exist in a state, an extension program must partner with a non-profit, disability organization. In the case of Wisconsin, the extension program partners with the Easter Seals FARM program. Through this partnership, extension performs outreach activities and promotion of the program. As mentioned in the last update, this is also available online, UW Extension and ESW FARM work together to create the AgrAbility program. One misconception is that AgrAbility or Easter Seals buys farmers equipment and assistive technology, this however, is not accurate. AgrAbility of Wisconsin and FARM program does not have funding for any assistive technology recommended by the FARM rehabilitation specialists.

The rehabilitation specialists provide information to farmers about other programs and assistance available to farmers. The assistance will include an on-farm visit and recommendations for assistive technology i.e. added tractor steps, powered feed cart and utility vehicle. One of these organizations that AgrAbility partners with is the Wisconsin Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR). The DVR program is designed to help people with disabilities to find employment through education and financial support. If a farmer does need assistance to purchase assistive technology, this is just one organization that can be contacted. Other organizations, may not necessarily have money available specifically for helping farmers with disabilities, however some funding that may be used to solve one issue may help with a disability. For example, the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) may provide assistance to help create conservation practices on the farm, but these plans may also have the added benefit of creating ease for the farmer's disability. There are other numerous organizations such as Wisconsin Farm Center, Wisconsin Independent Living Centers, and even the Department of Health and Family Services.

AGRABILITY ON THE ROAD

If I will be in your area in the near future, stop by and say hello:

UPCOMING EVENTS

- September 18-20, 2007 **Wisconsin Farm Technology Days, Albany**

PLOWING AHEAD NEWSLETTER

The Summer 2007 Plowing Ahead Newsletter was mailed in July and featured a look into the programs and events that make AgrAbility of Wisconsin successful as well as information about the upcoming AgrAbility Assistive Tech Awareness Day. The Fall 2007 Plowing Ahead Newsletter will be available in October. If you did not receive the newsletter and are interested in receiving it, please contact me at 608.262.9336 or aaw@mailplus.wisc.edu. You can also access the current and past newsletters online at www.bse.wisc.edu/agrability.

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