

SAFETY FIRST

Tractor and Equipment Safety...

Spring is upon us and with the warm weather comes fieldwork. Have you prepared your equipment for that first trip into the field? Completing a quick checklist to identify potential hazards associated with farm equipment and tractors will keep you, family members, and employees safer during the upcoming planting season.

- ✓ Are the fuel, oil and hydraulic systems free of leaks and maintained at recommended levels?
- ✓ Do all lights and flashers work?
- ✓ Are the operator's platforms free of grease, mud and tools?
- ✓ Is a first-aid kit available?

Below is an abbreviated version of the Farm Hazard Inspection Checklist for planting equipment and tractors.

- ✓ Are hydraulic components in good repair and free of leaks?
- ✓ Are all belts, chains and shafts adequately shielded?
- ✓ Are tires inflated to the recommended pressure?
- ✓ Are reflectors and SMV emblems clean, unfaded and undamaged?
- ✓ Are safety hitch pins available and used?
- ✓ Is the PTO master shield in place and in good condition?

By taking a few extra minutes to make sure that equipment is properly working, serious or fatal injuries can be prevented. If you are interested in learning more about safe equipment handling, check with your local UW Extension County Agricultural Agent or visit <https://www.uwex.edu>. ■

Submitted by: Cheryl Skjolaas, UW-Extension Outreach Safety Specialist

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Promoting Success in Agriculture for People with Disabilities and Their Families

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FEATURING:
WPS Farm Show Goes the Extra Mile

Safety First: Tractor and Equipment Safety

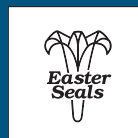
Spring's Around the Corner...Are You Ready?

ALSO LOOK FOR:
Partners...
by Mark Novak,
Agricultural Technologist for National AgrAbility Project

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Plowing Ahead

WPS Farm Show Goes the Extra Mile

Every year, farmers and non-farmers attend numerous farm shows throughout the state. For many, it is an opportunity to get away from the daily grind of the farm and learn about new technology, products and ideas that are available to help make farm life a little easier. Walking is part of the experience of farm shows, but for some visitors, a day of walking is a challenge, leaving many to either suffer through the day, or avoid farm shows altogether.

The Wisconsin Public Service (WPS) Farm Show has been active for 46 years as one of the largest farm shows in the state of Wisconsin. In the past, the show has provided resting areas to guests to aid in easing the walking required. As helpful as this can be, visitors with mobility issues still find it difficult to attend the show.

When Jeff Tomcek became the Farm Show Manager, Alan Gregory, a Public Service Agricultural Consultant, pointed out that many people did not attend the show or found it difficult to enjoy the exhibits because of mobility issues. Gregory, who was familiar with the Easter Seals Wisconsin FARM Program, suggested providing free scooter rentals for show visitors with mobility issues. This matter fell by the wayside until Tomcek's grandmother asked if there would be a way for her to get around the grounds if she attended the farm show. Tomcek realized that resting areas might not be enough for visitors and spoke with Gregory about the issue. Gregory suggested that Paul Leverenz, Vice

President of the FARM Program, might be able to offer some suggestions about obtaining scooters. Leverenz presented additional information about mobility issues and assistance to the staff, which, according to Leverenz, "are committed to trying to provide an accessible show."

The combined effort of the Easter Seals FARM Program and WPS was a huge success. The 2005 WPS Farm Show sponsored free scooter rentals from GT Mobility for the farm show's visitors. The response from the public was overwhelming. GT Mobility provided twelve scooters that were rented 36 times throughout the three-day show. Many visitors commented that

family members usually do not attend the show due to limited mobility, but with this service it would now make it possible for them to attend the show.

Mike Kawleski, WPS Agribusiness Market Leader, said the scooters are also successful because of the show's location – the EAA Grounds, Oshkosh. "This site provides large paved areas and aisle

space in the exhibitor areas so that the scooters can easily move through the show," Kawleski said. "The norm is baby boomers are reaching that age; more people are going to need to look at these services."

Due to the incredible response, the WPS farm show found the need to change



The scooters work well indoor and outdoors, go wherever a person can walk, and are easy to operate.

"I think WPS is doing a wonderful service. It shows they [WPS] cares about the people coming to this show."

-- Sue Kelly, Active Mobility

continued on page 2...

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rental companies to accommodate the increasing needs of the show visitors. Kansas-based Active Mobility Inc., will provide 25 to 30 scooters, 15 children's wagons and 10 to 15 manual wheelchairs for visitors to use, free of charge. "Active Mobility is very excited to be here. They have never been asked to be at show where the sponsor pays for them to be there and the scooters are free to the attendees," Tomcek said.

Sue Kelly, Rental Event Coordinator for Active Mobility, Inc., explained that the scooters work well indoor and outdoors, go wherever a person can walk, and are easy to operate. Kelly is thrilled to be apart of this opportunity. "Typically, consumers are charged a rental rate at shows where scooters are made available, but WPS is providing this service at no charge," Kelly said. "I think WPS is doing a wonderful service. It shows they care about the people coming to this show."

The 2006 WPS Farm Show takes place on March 28 through March 30 at the EAA Airgrounds, Oshkosh. The hours of

operation are 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Tuesday and Wednesday, and 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. on Thursday. The show will offer more than 350 exhibits, as well as seminars concerning energy efficiency and renewable energy. A booth in hanger C will provide free blood pressure and cholesterol screenings for a small fee.



Children's wagons will also be available for rental. (Picture is similar; but does not represent the type of wagon available for rental.)

before the show contact Active Mobility at 1-800-798-3726 or visit the website at <http://mobilitycartrentals.com>. ■

Active Mobility, Inc., will offer scooters, children's wagons and manual wheelchairs at no cost to WPS Farm Show visitors. The equipment will be located next to the mobility assistance parking at the show. Equipment rentals will require a driver's license or state issued identification. To reserve a scooter, wagon or wheelchair

Spring's Around the Corner...Are Your Ready?

Spring is just around the corner and with the warm weather comes the opportunity to spend more time outside. Gardening is one of the many outdoor hobbies that accompany the arrival of spring, but it can also be difficult to enjoy that hobby if a person has orthopedic or arthritic issues.



EZ Reacher can pick up items without have to bend and stretch.

However, there are assistive technology items available to aid gardeners and other outdoor enthusiasts to make those outdoor hobbies and jobs just a little easier. The EZ Reacher reduces bending and stretching to pick up items as small as a dime to a five-pound brick. The EZ Reacher is available through Arcoa Industries at www.arcoa.com or by calling 1.800.748.5529.

The constant kneeling and squatting required in a garden can be reduced with the use of the Garden Kneeler and Bench. It can be used as a bench or turned over to kneel on with



The Garden Kneeler and Bench reduces the strain of kneeling and bending.



Comfort Grip Hose Nozzle

handgrips to get up and down. Once finished with it, the Garden Kneeler and Bench can be folded up for easy storage. This item is available at Homestead Helpers, www.homesteadhelpers.com or by calling 1-802-644-2658.

Warm weather also brings the need to water plants and most spray nozzles on garden hoses require consistent squeezing of the handle to maintain water pressure, which can be difficult for arthritic hands. However, with the Comfort Grip Garden Hose Nozzle, the ergonomic design and on/off button instead allows has five spray patterns and increases the ease of use. This nozzle can be purchased by contacting Wellhaven@ at 1-888-564-1500 or www.wellhaven.com.

If you have questions about any of the products above or are interested in similar assistive technology, please feel free to contact Cally Ehle, Associate Outreach Specialist at (608) 262-9336 or aaw@mailplus.wisc.edu and she will be able to provide you with information on how to obtain these products. ■

Partners...

If you have not used the AgrAbility Project's on line product database recently, you may want to check out the latest search feature just added in January 2006. The web interface now allows you to "save" products as you are searching the database. For example, you could create a custom resource list of saved items based on the farmer/rancher's needs. You can also save that list for future reference or print a copy of that list to leave/send to the farmer/rancher or to include in his/her farm site assessment and/or final report. (<http://www.agabilityproject.org/search/index.cfm>)

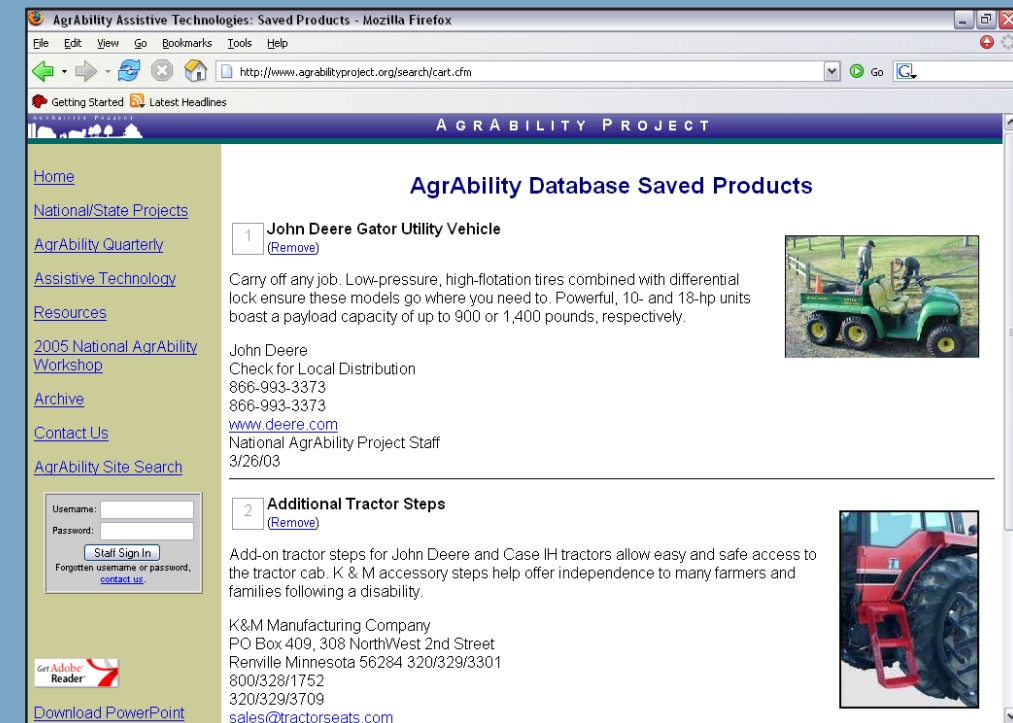
Using this new web interface feature is very easy. It is

modeled after other common on line shopping web sites that have become increasingly popular. When saving products, you can review your saved items at anytime and if you change your mind, removing items is very simple to do within the interface.

Below is a sample custom resource list created using the new web interface. Please contact menovak@wisc.edu, if you have any questions or problems with the on line product database.

Mark Novak

Outreach Specialist, National AgrAbility Project



A sample custom resource list created using the new web interface. Please contact menovak@wisc.edu, if you have any questions or problems with the on line product database.

AgrAbility of Wisconsin Upcoming Shows & Events

Please stop by and visit us at these upcoming spring events:

- PDPW Trade Show, Madison March 14-15, 2006
- WPS Farm Show, Oshkosh March 28-30, 2006
- Farm Appreciation Day, Shawano April 5, 2006
- WI Community Leadership Summit, Appleton April 26, 2006
- North Country Independent Living Assistive Technology Fair, Ashland April 27, 2006
- Kewaunee County Safety Day Camp, Luxemburg May 19, 2006

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