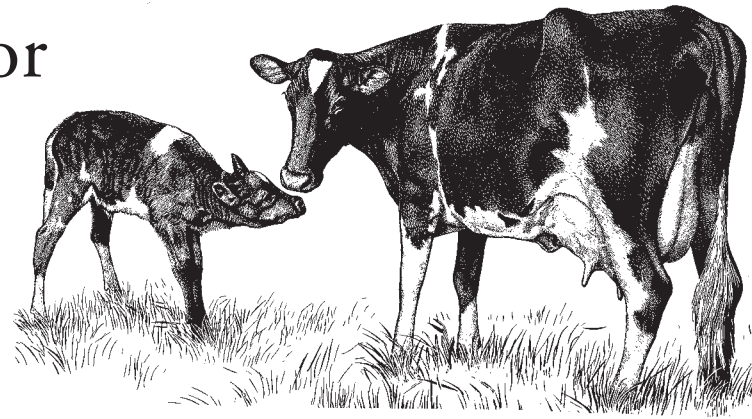


# Neighbor to Neighbor

"Neighbor to Neighbor" features inventive, "farm-grown" assistive technology! Have YOU invented a unique gadget on your farm that makes work a little easier? If so, **Plowing Ahead** wants to hear from you. Fill out the form below and send it, and a photo of your invention, to:

**AgrAbility of Wisconsin**  
460 Henry Mall  
Madison, WI 53706



## NEIGHBOR TO NEIGHBOR INVENTIONS

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

What the invention is and what it does \_\_\_\_\_



**AgrAbility of Wisconsin**  
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Madison, WI 53706

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Promoting Success in Agriculture for People with Disabilities and Their Families

Winter 1999  
Volume 7 No. 3

## FEATURING:

*AgrAbility of Wisconsin:  
A Year in Review*

## ALSO LOOK FOR:

*Partners...  
by Christine Fessler*

*Chain Saw Safety -  
Minimize the risk of  
kickback*

*Upcoming Events*

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AgrAbility of Wisconsin

# Plowing Ahead

## AGRABILITY OF WISCONSIN: *A Year In Review*

In this wintry January, AgrAbility of Wisconsin is putting the final touches on a renewal grant for federal funding and is taking stock of the events of the past year. The staff of AgrAbility of Wisconsin would like to share with you, our many supporters, some of the accomplishments and challenges of the past year and our vision for the future.

### GRANTS

AgrAbility of Wisconsin received a new federal grant ensuring the continuation of the project through March 31, 2002. AgrAbility will continue to provide the same services it has in the past, including on-farm consultations, farm shows, presentations and workshops. The project also had many new ideas for improving and expanding these services.

Because the federal grant covers only about half of the expenses of AgrAbility, Easter Seals Wisconsin and UW-Cooperative Extension continually search for additional funding to support our services to farmers with disabilities. Through a grant from WisTech, AgrAbility works to increase access to assistive technology for farmers with disabilities in northeast Wisconsin. Other support for AgrAbility of Wisconsin include the Kraft Dairy Trust and the Land O' Lakes Foundation.

### DIRECT SERVICES

AgrAbility of Wisconsin has always focused on providing services on the farm to farmers with disabilities. AgrAbility is currently working with 128 farmers and their families throughout the state. Since January 1, 1998, 46 new farmers have become involved with the program.

AgrAbility continues to provide these services on the farm, where Paul Leverenz, Director of the Easter Seals Resource Center for Farmers with



*AgrAbility staff visit farmers to discuss how their disability or health condition affects their farming operation.*

Disabilities, will sit down with the farmer and his/her family and discuss how the disability is affecting the farmwork. All services to farmers are confidential and free of charge.

### FARM SHOWS

AgrAbility of Wisconsin staffed exhibits at the Green Bay Power and Machinery Show and the Madison Farm Show in 1998. Through these farm shows, AgrAbility can show area farmers how the program can help farmers with disabilities on the farm. These shows also give us the opportunity to visit with farmers we have worked with in the past. Stop by if you get the chance in 1999! The show dates for 1999 are:

**Madison Farm Show**  
March 17-19, 1999

**Green Bay Power and Machinery Show**  
March 30-April 1, 1999

At Farm Progress Days, AgrAbility of Wisconsin exhibited in the Youth Tent as part of a safety and health action center. Over 2,000 youth went through the AgrAbility wheelchair obstacle course during the three day show. The wheelchair obstacle course contains many

*continued on page 2...*

continued from page 1...

of the obstacles individuals who use wheelchairs deal with everyday, such as ramps, carpeting and doorways. Look for AgrAbility of Wisconsin at the 1999 Farm Progress Days in Grant County July 13-15!

In October, AgrAbility of Wisconsin and the National AgrAbility project sponsored and staffed a booth at the World Dairy Expo. Visitors from around the world had the opportunity to learn about AgrAbility and the services it can provide.

AgrAbility of Wisconsin and the national project will be at the World Dairy Expo again this year in Madison, September 29-October 3, 1999.



Youth maneuver their way through an obstacle course of ramps, carpeting and doorways with a wheelchair.

#### TRAINING AND INFORMATION ACTIVITIES

On September 3, 1998, AgrAbility of Wisconsin and Kewaunee county Extension sponsored a farm tour at Rolling Hills Dairy Farm in Kewaunee County. Jerome Gaedtke, the host, has been an AgrAbility consumer. Over 50 area farmers and professionals had the opportunity to see how AgrAbility can provide assistance to farmers and their families dealing with the effects of a disability. Another farm tour is planned for the coming year.

AgrAbility of Wisconsin promoted the program this year through a state-wide marketing plan which featured a farmer who had been helped by the program. In addition to this promotional effort, AgrAbility also received publicity through various newspaper, radio and television interviews conducted throughout the year.

#### NATIONAL ACTIVITIES

In addition to the work being done in the state, AgrAbility of Wisconsin staff have also taken an active role in National AgrAbility issues. Staff are participating in work groups addressing issues such as enhancing staff success, redesigning information collection, and marketing the National AgrAbility Project. AgrAbility staff also participated in the National AgrAbility Workshop in St. Louis in November. Staff were asked to present on making partnerships work, funding issues, and committee work.

#### FUTURE ACTIVITIES

AgrAbility of Wisconsin has planned several new activities to enhance our services to farmers with disabilities over the next few years.


- ◆ **Farmer Network:** The Farmer Network is a peer counseling network developed from farmers who have been helped by AgrAbility. Beginning in the northeast

region, we have identified four farmers who are willing to talk with other farmers in the area about AgrAbility. This project will be expanded to the entire state with a goal of having 36 farmers in the network to represent all 72 counties.

- ◆ **Speakers Bureau:** The Speakers Bureau will also be developed from past consumers who are willing to help promote AgrAbility. Speakers Bureau volunteers will take displays to local events and help host displays at statewide farm shows. They will also be available to speak to small groups in their area.
- ◆ **Website development:** AgrAbility of Wisconsin will develop an internet website in the coming year. We will include: basic information about the program, available resources and assistive technology, the quarterly newsletter, links to other organizations and a means to request additional information.
- ◆ **Caregivers program:** AgrAbility will develop a caregivers program to complement its services to farmers with disabilities. This program will include small, informal workshops around the state to provide caregivers of farmers with disabilities with emotional support, information and resources.
- ◆ **Work placement project:** AgrAbility is developing a plan to place individuals with disabilities in farm jobs to address both higher unemployment rates among individuals with disabilities in rural areas, and lack of labor on expanding farms. The pilot is being planned in Sheboygan County where AgrAbility is working closely with the Extension agent. AgrAbility will match the individuals with the farms, provide the necessary support services and follow up at three, six, and twelve months. If successful, this project will be expanded statewide and developed into a national model.
- ◆ **1999 National AgrAbility Workshop:** AgrAbility of Wisconsin is hosting the 1999 National AgrAbility Workshop in Madison in October. Over 200 professionals and farmers from across the country attend this workshop every year. The workshop features breakout sessions and speakers on various aspects of farming with a disability, and local farm tours. This is a great opportunity to showcase AgrAbility of Wisconsin and the farmers we work with!

#### TO ALL AGRABILITY SUPPORTERS

As AgrAbility of Wisconsin looks to the coming months, we wish all of our many supporters success and happiness in the New Year. We welcome your input and ideas and look forward to working with you in the future!



### Plowing Ahead

Editor and Layout designer:  
Amy Jo Bazile  
Published by AgrAbility of Wisconsin.  
Please direct inquiries to:

**AgrAbility of Wisconsin**  
460 Henry Mall  
Madison, WI 53706  
(608)262-9336 Voice  
(608)262-1228 Fax

## Partners

When invited to write "Partners," my thoughts kept returning to some of our most valuable partners in AgrAbility, the farmers with whom we work. Particularly in this holiday season when we think of that which makes life most precious and meaningful and those things which we most value, I think of them, because in the last few years I have been awed and deeply moved on many occasions. In over 25 years working with people with disabilities I have heard many stories. But through AgrAbility, I have witnessed unparalleled ingenuity and tenacity. Perseverance in the face of great odds is a quality which many farmers seem to possess. The depths of one's capacity however, can only be realized when faced with something such as a disability. So many of the farmers and families we work with in AgrAbility are highly creative partners and they continually come up with ideas, inventing and constructing adaptations to their equipment and facilities, all with great humility and humor to boot. I have met farmers whom I felt possessed every quality which one would want to see in a human being. They are to me a touchstone, and I am inspired by their skill and resourcefulness and unflagging hopeful and steadfast determination. Many farmers serve as

invaluable advocates, spreading the word about opportunities available through AgrAbility. They are valued partners.

Thanks also to the many, many people and organizations who support AgrAbility and whom we are proud to call partners: Division of Vocational Rehabilitation personnel, our AgrAbility Advisory Council, WisTech, Land O' Lakes, Kraft Dairy Trust, UW-Extension agents, Easter Seals Board members, and many others. May the new year bring you joy.

Sincerely,

*Christine Fessler*  
President/CEO  
Easter Seals Wisconsin



## Chain Saw Safety - Minimize the Risk of Kickback

Chain saw kickback can result in death or severe injury. The reaction to the saw chain striking an object can throw the saw violently back toward the operator, sometimes with disastrous results. Approximately one-fourth of the injuries associated with chain saws involve kickback.

Kickback is the term to describe unexpected upward motion of the guide bar. Kickback occurs when the end portion of the nose of the bar strikes an object and the chain momentarily snags.

The most common and probably most violent kickback occurs when the chain and cutters guide bar make contact, either accidentally or intentionally in the "kickback zone."

To avoid kickback:

- Don't touch the tip of the bar to any object while the chain is running.
- Always hold the chain saw firmly with both hands.
- Use the proper grip. Grasp the forward handle with your left hand, palm down, wrapping your fingers around the handle bar, keep handle bar in the webbing between your index finger and thumb. Grasp the rear handle firmly with your right hand.
- Use wedges to avoid pinching the bar when cutting larger pieces.
- Avoid cutting limbs above your mid-chest height.
- Wear protective clothing, such as a hard hat, hearing protection, a full face shield, protective leg chaps, sure-grip gloves, and safety shoes.



## UPCOMING EVENTS

**Madison Farm Show**  
March 17-19, 1999

**Green Bay Power and Machinery Show**  
March 30-April 1, 1999

**Farm Progress Days**  
Grant County  
July 13-15, 1999

**World Dairy Expo**  
September 29-  
October 3, 1999



Adapted, with permission, from materials produced by the UW Center for Agricultural Safety and Health.