



MAINE AgrAbility

**Managing Pain on the Farm:
A simplified pain tool to help farmers maintain
productivity and decrease risk of injury**

With Maine AgrAbility Specialists

Brie Weisman, OTR/L

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With assistance from Kristin Desrochers, OTR/L

Michaela Marden, MOTS, USM



Presenters



Brie Weisman, OTR/L, Adapt-Able Living LLC, Ellis River Farm

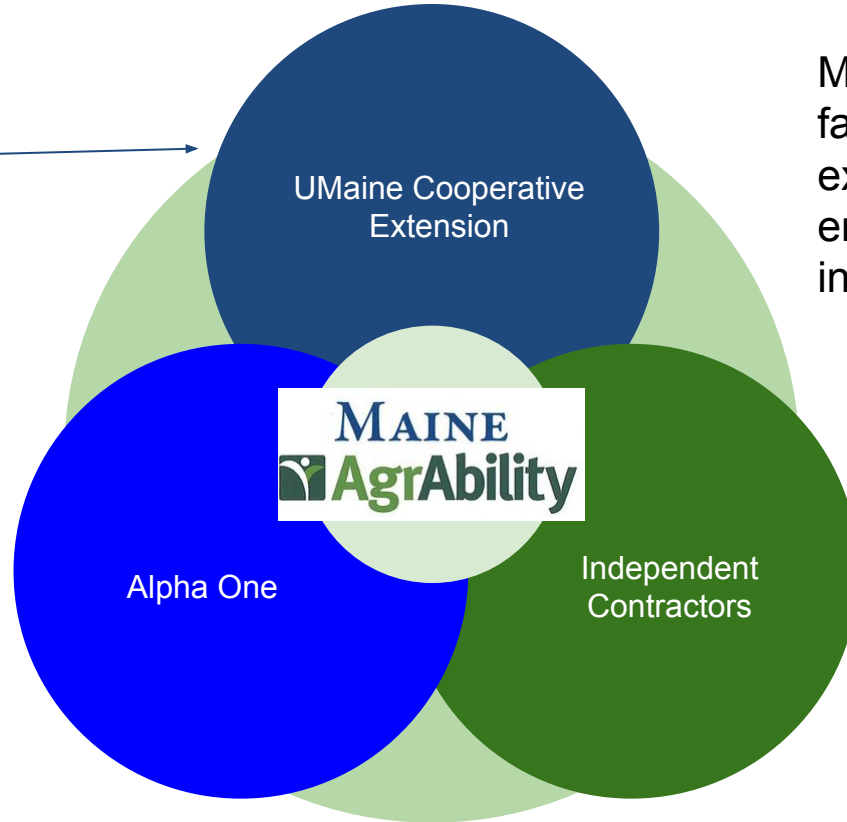
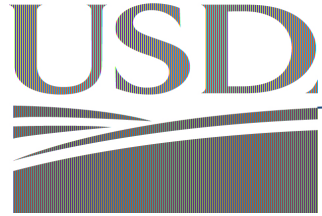
Brie has been contracted to work with Maine AgrAbility for the past four years. She has been an OT for about 12 years and has worked in hospitals, rehabilitation, nursing homes and continues to work in Home Health. She has a private practice specializing in helping seniors age in place by providing home modification. She also raises registered Icelandic Sheep and grows winter greens at Ellis River Farm with her husband in Western Maine.



Ketra Crosson, OTR/L, Independent Living Specialist, Alpha One

Ketra Crosson works for the disability related non-profit partner with Maine AgrAbility. She has been delivering community based independent living services for over 30 years.

Who is Maine AgrAbility?



Maine AgrAbility supports farmers, and farm workers who experience barriers to employment such as aging, injury, or chronic illness.



Learning Objectives

1. Understand how to use the pain brochure as a tool to help clients identify pain
2. Understand how to work with clients to teach them how to independently identify pain.
3. Teach clients how to adjust tasks for successful work performance
4. Discuss prevention measures to stay functional

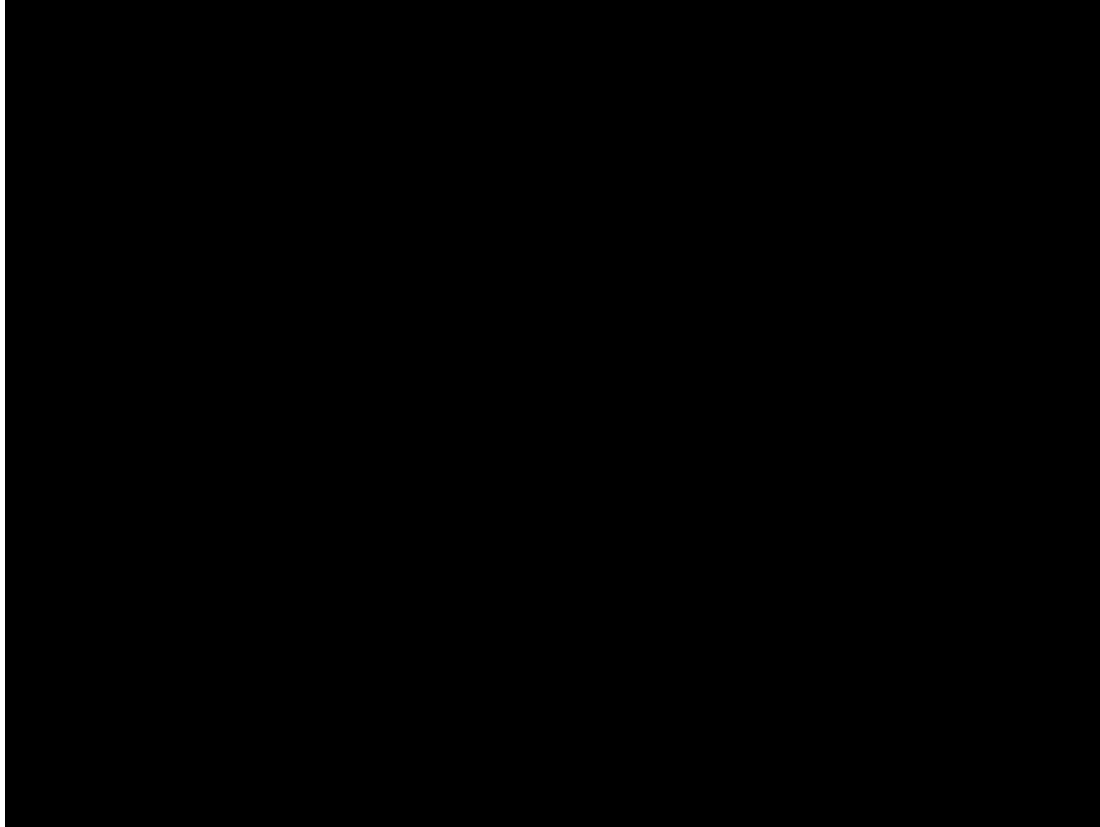
Motivations

- We observed many farmers normalize their pain as a part of the job and they would push through the pain to “get the job done”
- Medical model pain tools did not offer direction or instruction and were often too subjective
- We thought a visual tool could be hung and referred back to often, provided a visual cue to check in with their pain, and was easy to bring to the doctor as needed

Evolution

- Covid-19 created contact restrictions and we wanted to find a way to continue to reach clients
- Saw traffic light tools for a variety of conditions through Brie's home health position
- Started as shoulder, evolved to back, then realized pain was the common denominator

Using the Tool with Robin



The Pain Tool

Identify Your Pain

Green: All systems GO

- Full mobility and strength
- Usual range of motion
- Ability to do routine tasks
- Healthy mixture of emotions

Yellow: Proceed with CAUTION

- Reduced mobility
- Decreased range of motion
- Weakness or discomfort
- Need to alter routine tasks
- Emotional distress

Red: STOP now

- Pain with or without movement
- Very limited range of motion
- Persistent tingling or numbness
- Difficulty or inability to do routine tasks or chores
- Disinterest in self care
- Increased emotional distress
- Lack of sleep
- Cognitive changes
- Self-medicating (alcohol, drugs)

Manage Your Pain



- Continue routine activities

- Ask PCP about preventive health steps

- Warm-up, stretch, and avoid strenuous activity

- Call AgrAbility for advice on adaptive tools and techniques

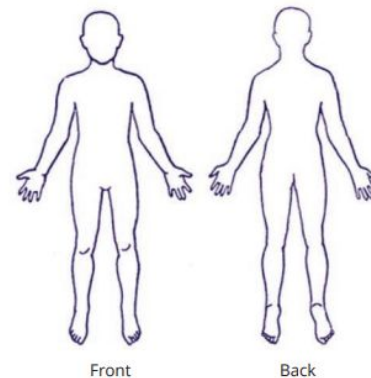
- Delegate or delay tasks

- See your PCP

Locate Your Pain

Pain: It's all in a day's work.

- Working with unpredictable livestock.
- Pushing, pulling, shoveling, lifting, and carrying
- Maintaining awkward positions.
- Putting up hay, shearing sheep, harvesting produce, moving machinery.
- Exposure to vibration from sitting for hours on a tractor.



Using the Tool with Shepherds

Using the tool to help shape adaptation strategies for shepherds



Photo Credit: Brie Weisman



Adaptations Techniques and Tools



Using the Tool with Robin

Working with farmers to improve pain management



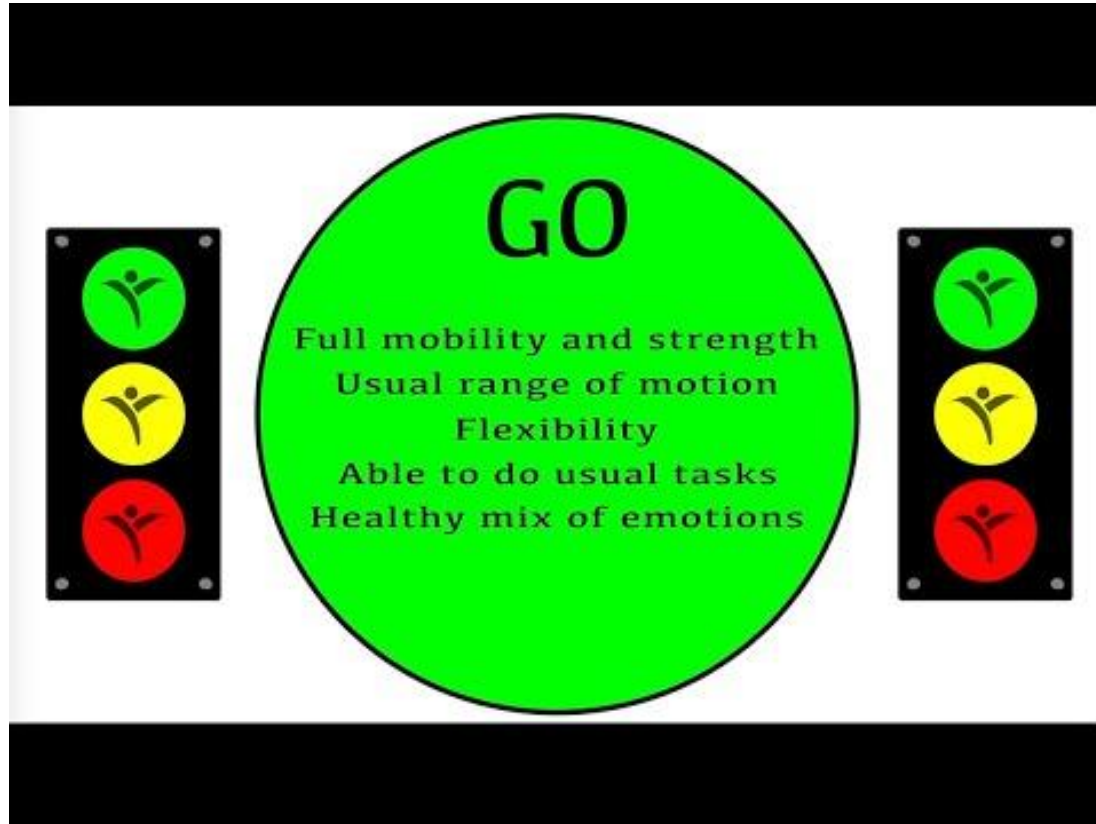
Expanding

- What type of agriculture production are your farmers doing
- What are you seeing for pain/functional issues
- What do you currently do to help farmers identify their pain
- How do you support farmers to address pain and alter work tasks
- Would you see this tool being useful and applicable with your farmers

Next Steps

- Try it out with more farmers
- Determine if we need to modify the tool for improvement
- Get feedback from others (YOU) who use the tool with their farmers

Explanation Video



Resources

Connect: maine.agrability@maine.edu

207-944-1533

Website: <https://extension.umaine.edu/agrability/>

- On the website you can find
 - News
 - Network Connections
 - Solutions & Resources
 - Access the pain tool as well as other resources
 - Videos

References

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Questions?

Thank you for attending!

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