

2023 AgrAbility NTW Poster Descriptions

- **Evaluation of Food Safety Education among Veteran Farmers** *by Autumn Stoll and Dr. Betty Feng- Purdue University-* The effectiveness of food safety educational interventions is rarely evaluated with small-scale veteran farmers as the subjects. Therefore, leaving a gap in understanding what veteran farmers' educational needs and preferences are. In 2019, three educational interventions were pilot-tested among Indiana military veteran farmers, including learning circles, in-person workshops, and electronic newsletters. The interventions were expanded on a multi-state level in 2022 and a series of webinars was launched. This poster will present the findings from the intervention evaluation and will present the recommendations for the development of food safety education interventions for military veteran farmers.
- **Washington State AgrAbility Project: Rebuilding an Extension Program** *by Don McMoran, Alyssa Wade, Emily Whittier, Deb Eidsness and Debbie Fredricks- Washington State University, Washington State AgrAbility Program-* Affiliated with the National AgrAbility Project, the USDA-funded Washington State AgrAbility Project (WSAP) has served farmers, ranchers, and agricultural workers throughout the state inhibited by injury, illness, or disability since 2019. The program helps ease the return to work and daily living activities and reduce the rate of secondary injury. Educating and getting sign ups for the program during a pandemic proved difficult, requiring the switch from in person to mostly online outreach. In early 2020 WSAP was developing assistive technology (AT) lending library kits while delivering in-person trainings and demonstrations. However, with an elevated focus on behavioral health and excessive stress brought on by the pandemic, farmers and stakeholders were eager for behavioral health messaging which then opened the door for WSAP to present to more audiences. The task at hand sent several WSAP staff searching for new careers (Farming, Ag Education, Marketing and Electric bus sales) and allowed an opportunity to redesign how the WSAP program would be ran in the final year (4) of the grant. Given the immense geographic area of Washington State it was determined that additional employees would be required to complete the outreach activities. A total of 4 full and part time employees were hired, training occurred online and in person at the University of Washington in Seattle with Co-PI's Washington Assistive Technology Act Program (WATAP) and Northwest Access Fund on September 12th, 2022. Since that time there have been outreach performed at multiple workshops and conferences. A total of three home assessments have been performed. eNote write ups deadlines were met and weekly team meetings completed. The team is well on its way of accomplishing deliverables laid out in the original grant application and is excited for the future outreach events.
- **The Impact of Stressors on Guam's Farming Community** *by Grace Anne Dela Cruz, Elvira Gisog and Kuan-Ju Chen- University of Guam-* The poster highlights the Producer Stress Survey conducted with regional agricultural producers in the Western Pacific Island states of Guam, Northern Marianas (NMI), and Federated States of Micronesia (FSM). The poster includes a brief abstract about the study effort with the Western Region Agricultural Stress Assistance Program (WRASAP), following a short background introduction on how the initiative began and the increasing mental health concern in the agriculture sector, the methodology followed, some takeaway messages from our survey results, a discussion of the results and recent efforts, the future direction of the study, references, and acknowledgments.

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- **Advocating for a More Inclusive, Accessible Future in Agriculture** by *Dr. Ivette Ruiz- Healing By Growing Farms-* How can farm work be used to heal and support us through trauma and aging? Join Healing By Growing (HBG) Farms in building a more inclusive, accessible and resilient future accepting of all abilities as Dr. Ivette Ruiz shares her research survey findings of over (100) farmers in the Northeast.
- **Legacy Innovation Farming Economics Project (LIFE)** by *Ed Sheldon and Chuck Baldwin- NAP/Purdue University, Tameka Peoples- Peoples Foundation and John Jamerson- Legacy Farming and Health Group-* In 2019, the National AgrAbility Project joined the Peoples Foundation and the Legacy Farming and Health Group to form the Legacy Innovation Farming Economics (LIFE) Project. This project, supported by the USDA 2501 grant program, has been successful in promoting the utilization of USDA services (including AgrAbility) among socially disadvantaged population and military veterans involved in agriculture throughout the country. In 2022, the LIFE Project's success in distributing technical support and educational resources to aspiring agriculturalists was recognized by the team receiving a second three-year grant to continue the effort. This poster presentation will highlight the LIFE Project's successes in reaching underserved audiences, and preview the team's plan for the next three years.
- **Managing Stress on the Farm** by *Suzanna Windon and Abbie Spackman- AgrAbility for Pennsylvanians-* This interactive workshop shares knowledge on farmers' (occupational) stress and stress resilience strategies. The first part of the workshop will provide a background of stress, assessing and recognizing its symptoms. The second part will help participants cope with stress. During the workshop, I plan to use a short video and questions to the audience that stimulate critical thinking and group discussion. These will help us interact with the workshop participants.
- **Idaho Harvest Heroes Program Engages Military Veterans in Growing Food and Feeding Communities** by *Ariel Agenbroad and Connie May- University of Idaho Extension-* The University of Idaho Extension Harvest Heroes Veteran Beginning Farming Education Program was developed in 2019, utilizing UI Extension Cultivating Success™ small farms and Idaho Victory Garden family gardening curriculum. The program was designed to engage and train military veterans and their families through a combination of classroom time and hands-on training at a community farm focused on the skills needed to grow food for themselves and their communities, or to establish small farm or food enterprises. Harvest Heroes training also includes skills that could apply to jobs in small scale agriculture, increased awareness of veterans' programs, introduction to a variety of veterans' service organizations, and horticultural therapy. In 2022, the nine families in the Boise-area program grew and harvested 1662 lbs. of produce at an approximate dollar value of \$3,311. Food was donated to several local shelters, food pantries and made available to the neighborhood where the garden is located. Over the years, several raised bed designs have been suggested by veteran participants and designed with accessibility in mind to better serve our participants with disabilities. Mid-season and end-of-season program evaluations indicate that participants have increased their knowledge and skills in 12 key topic areas related to garden planning, food production and sustainability. All participants rated the Harvest Heroes Program as "good" to "very good" in terms of providing opportunities to develop relationships with other veterans and to facilitate personal healing. One participant shared, "I really enjoyed the program. The instructors really did a lot of one-on-one work and adjusted according to each person's abilities and capabilities. I

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also enjoyed the opportunity to meet other veterans and even talk to a few on a regular basis.” A participant from 2019 recently bought his own farm. Another participant from 2020 with his own small farm now serves as a mentor for other young veteran farmers.

- **Engaging Student Design to Address AT Needs and Awareness** by *Brian Luck- AgrAbility of WI and Kody Habeck- University of Wisconsin-* Senior and freshman design courses are used to design prototype AT for Action Trackchair, while increasing the students' knowledge of the need to design equipment for individuals with disabilities.
- **A Community Based Nutrition Tool to Address Childhood Obesity** by *Conchita Newman and Dreamal Worthen- Florida A & M University-* This research aimed to assess behavioral change in economically challenged elementary-aged students at risk for obesity. The goal was to ascertain the possibility of deterring childhood obesity using community-based programming. A multifaceted, evidence-based educational approach included hands-on activities, nutrition, and physical activity education.
- **A New Mission: How TN AgrAbility Helps Veterans Succeed and Partners with the Farmer Veteran Coalition of Tennessee (FVC TN) and TN New Farmer Academy** by *Eileen Legault- TN AgrAbility/University of TN Extension and Finis Stribling- TN AgrAbility/TN State University Extension-* Individuals who work in an agricultural setting face challenges that affect their productivity, mental and physical health, and quality of life. Through TN AgrAbility services and assistive technology, what was seemingly impossible has become possible; and what was out of reach has become achievable for many individuals who refuse to give up their calling to farm. TN AgrAbility Project shares resources to help beginning farmers and farmers with a disability; and information about the federally funded Assistive Technology (AT) State Programs, Department of Vocational Rehabilitation and collaborate to fund AT.

Since 1994, the TN AgrAbility Project has helped more than 2,000 farmers with disabilities to ensure they have access to the training, technologies and networks necessary to continue working in their chosen profession of agriculture. The goal is to serve at least 60 new farmers with disabilities annually; provide support to producers with disabilities and their families; and build service capacity at the state, regional and national levels through technical assistance, education, and networking.

The Farmer Veteran Coalition programs have a unique partnership with AgrAbility. The mission of the Farmer Veteran Coalition of Tennessee (FVC-TN) is to mobilize Tennessee veterans to feed America. Many of the veterans FVC TN work with carry visible and invisible wounds. A lot of FVC TN members has a service-related disability, AgrAbility supports these farmer veterans by seeking resources to help their agricultural dream. FVC TN has a membership of over 1,500 TN farmers who are veterans that need Extension and USDA services and want to farm.

TN AgrAbility continues to work with farmers and veterans with disabilities who want to farm. Sometimes the ones who are also beginning farmers do not immediately need assistive technology but rather to learn about local resources such as Extension and USDA services and relate to other veteran farmers. Veterans need a purpose and mission, and farming is growing for a whole new generation.

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- **Missouri AgrAbility assist client farmers to promote hope, independence, equity, diversity, and accessible self-employment opportunities in agriculture** by *Karen Funkenbusch, John Fuller, Elizabeth Picking, and Brenda Schreck- University of Missouri Extension and Nalee Yang, mary Bolling, Angela Brattin and Susan Jaster- Lincoln University Cooperative Extension-* Agriculture-related occupations present a unique situation for diverse AgrAbility customers such as Anabaptist, beginning farmers, non-traditional minorities, veterans, and women in agriculture. AgrAbility diverse client farmers face many challenges after acquiring a disability, chronic health condition or disorder. Visit this poster to learn more about providing culturally appropriate resources to meet the needs of diverse client populations.