

Oklahoma AgrAbility Project funded for an additional four years

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) recently announced the Oklahoma AgrAbility Project is funded for an additional four-year grant. This new award covers the time period of April 1, 2010 through March 31, 2014.

Oklahoma AgrAbility, established in 2002, is one of 22 state AgrAbility Projects funded by the USDA, National Institute of Food and Agriculture, which also supports the National AgrAbility Project. The national Project was created in the 1990 Farm Bill to assist people with disabilities employed in agriculture. Linking the Cooperative Extension Service at a land-grant university with a private nonprofit disability service organization, provides the means to promote independence in agricultural production and rural living. The national Project, based at Purdue University's Breaking New Ground Resource Center, serves as a resource for state Projects by providing training, technical assistance and information about available resources to help people with disabilities employed in agriculture.

What is Oklahoma AgrAbility?

The Oklahoma Project is a unique partnership composed of land-grant, Oklahoma State University, Oklahoma Cooperative Extension Service (OCES); the nonprofit disability service organization, Oklahoma Assistive Technology Foundation (OkAT), with services provided through Oklahoma ABLE Tech; and the Langston University School of Physical Therapy. Oklahoma AgrAbility also maintains working relationships with nonprofit organizations as well as state agencies including the Oklahoma Department of Rehabilitation Services (DRS). This agency provides funding for needed assistive technologies for farmers and ranchers meeting DRS eligibility criteria.

OCES represents a federal, state and county partnership that has worked since 1914 to serve the diverse needs of the state's citizens. OCES county educators serve as "the front door" to the university, linking all 77 counties with research-based information in the areas of agriculture, family and consumer sciences, 4-H and youth development and economic development. OCES works to develop human resources, improve the profitability and sustainability of agriculture, protect and sustain the environment, revitalize rural Oklahoma and enhance the quality of life for all Oklahomans.

Since 2002, the Oklahoma AgrAbility Project has reached and exceeded local, state and national goals under the leadership

of OSU Division of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources. The Project management recently moved to the OSU College of Human Environmental Sciences, Department of Human Development and Family Science (HDFS). This move to HDFS will continue to strengthen the Project's mission and goals in partnership with OCES Family and Consumer Science (FCS) and 4-H Youth Development field staff. FCS/4-H Youth Development educators, located in Oklahoma's county Extension offices, will provide practical education and outreach working to promote independence and quality of life for identified farmers, ranchers and their families.

Jan Johnston, OCES State Specialist in Gerontology and Assistant Professor in HDFS, is the new Principal Investigator. Johnston, working with the Oklahoma AgrAbility program coordinator and a statewide presence of FCS/4-H educators, will address the educational, referral and outreach needs among an increasingly aging Oklahoma population who qualify for AgrAbility. She serves as the Project's Co-Director.

Linda Jaco continues to serve as Co-Director and Director of Oklahoma ABLE Tech representing OkAT, the Project's nonprofit disability service organization. Jaco, along with Sandra Stevenson, Project Manager, and Stacy Bauter, Project Assistant, work to provide direct assistance through on-farm assessments, tailoring recommendations for assistive technologies to improve farm production and quality of life for the farmer, rancher and family. In fulfilling the Project's mandate, Johnston and Jaco work together to meet the Extension and disability goals of the new four-year work plan.

Millee Jorge, and Lynn Jeffries, represent the Langston University School of Physical Therapy assisting in overall program evaluation as well as providing valuable post-graduate education to rehabilitation professionals. As organizers of the successful Rehabilitating Oklahoma Farmer Conference, now in its sixth year, Jorge and Jeffries work to prepare a healthcare workforce to be attuned to the specific needs and solutions for the agricultural worker, further ensuring the sustainability of AgrAbility.

New and continuing AgrAbility partners in the upcoming work plan include: Department of Rehabilitation Services; Department of Career Technology and Education representing



Continued on page 2

Funding, continued

the FFA; OK ABLE Tech/OkAT; Langston University School of Physical Therapy; other state and regional AgrAbility Projects; and the National AgrAbility Project.

With the addition of OCES FCS/4-H Youth Development educators working side by side with partnering members of Oklahoma Home and Community Education Inc., Oklahoma AgrAbility continues to be represented by an outstanding group of local, state and national partners. These organizations will continue to work together to enhance the Project's three priority areas.

AgrAbility's Three Priority Areas

The mission of the Oklahoma AgrAbility Project covers three priority areas: education, direct assistance and networking.

Education: An essential goal of AgrAbility is to directly reach farmers, ranchers and their families to better understand how the program may assist them. This is done through educational programs and hands-on demonstrations that teach and support farmers, ranchers and their families who have a disability or debilitating injury that limit their ability to perform essential farm tasks. Providing education to assist community and health care professionals identify and accommodate farm and home needs for farmers and ranchers is also key to the success of AgrAbility. In these ways, education serves to build knowledge in providing practical solutions and enhancing individual and family quality of life.

Direct Assistance: The central goal of AgrAbility is to

be of direct assistance to those farmers, ranchers and family members who are in need of Project services. The educational and networking efforts of AgrAbility partners come together to help identify and assist those who could benefit. AgrAbility staff work closely with these individuals to tailor assistance to meet specific needs and goals. Providing on-site visits or by phone, the staff works with the client to identify immediate needs, resources and solutions that will allow farmers, ranchers and their families to continue to be successful in agricultural production and rural living.

Networking: The Project's overarching network, with a growing list of partners and community associations, continues to impact the capacity to reach those in need of services. Oklahoma AgrAbility links agricultural families with resources with extensive networking. These needed resources may include low-cost modifications to farm, home, equipment and work site operations, and when appropriate, provide technical assistance in making such modifications. Building vital networks of professional organizations, agencies and service groups ensure ways to mutually share current information and resources with individuals, families and organizations.

Oklahoma AgrAbility staff and those who provide the Project services in local communities around the state look forward to hearing from you. Please visit our Web site at www.agrability.okstate.edu or call us toll-free call **888-885-5588** to learn more about how we can help.

Oklahoma Equipment Connection: Agriculture update

Do you need assistive technology or farm equipment but can't afford to buy new? The Oklahoma Equipment Exchange (OEE) lists pre-owned farm equipment and assistive technology devices in a "want-ad" format. Individuals can post an announcement for equipment they would like to buy, sell or donate. This free statewide service helps Oklahomans with disabilities acquire used equipment that can assist them with their farming needs. You can list farming equipment such as: tractors, loaders, panels and miscellaneous tools. OEE also lists assistive technology to resolve daily living, mobility and even recreation and leisure barriers.

Do you have extra equipment you would like to buy, sell or donate? Are you in need of adaptive equipment? Visit the OEE at <http://oec.okstate.edu> or call the Oklahoma AgrAbility Project at **888-885-5588** to post your announcement.

Oklahoma AgrAbility staff

Oklahoma State University

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Jan Johnston, Principal Investigator & Co-Director

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Stacy Bauter, Program Assistant

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School of Physical Therapy

Millie Jorge, Dean of Physical Therapy

Lynn Jeffries, Director,

Dr. Of Physical Therapy Programs, Associate Professor



Oklahoma AgrAbility: Four Years in Review 2006-2010

Date	Public Awareness	Information & Referral	Farm Visits	Follow Up Visits	
2006 - 2007	Apr - June	797	19	6	4
	July - Sept	1,393	10	5	4
	Oct - Dec	917	5	2	2
	Jan - Mar	1,783	9	6	2
2007 - 2008	Apr - June	1,439	21	16	6
	July - Sept	347	9	4	3
	Oct - Dec	244	8	8	3
	Jan - Mar	917	5	2	5
2008 - 2009	Apr - June	550,813	19	6	4
	July - Sept	302	12	7	3
	Oct - Dec	75	4	4	2
	Jan - Mar	450,974	2	1	0
2009 - 2010	Apr - June	8,397	15	0	2
	July - Sept	38,815	24	3	3
	Oct - Dec	10,826	11	4	1
	Jan - Mar	326,312	24	4	2
TOTALS	1,394,351	197	78	46	

National AgrAbility Project monthly e-notes

State projects contribute to a national e-newsletter sent to the AgrAbility list serve. Visit our news and events page and the listed links to view Oklahoma's monthly e-notes.

Please visit www.agrability.okstate.edu or call us at 888-885-5588 for more event updates and news features.

Information and Referral — The Oklahoma AgrAbility Project provides additional information upon request.



Gil
Bryan County

"AgrAbility has been a success because they were able to recommend a course of action that is feasible and that actually happened. AgrAbility suggested and provided things that I actually use."

Public Awareness — Staff of the AgrAbility Project setup a display at trade shows, farms shows, fairs and other conventions.

"AgrAbility has let me know that people who care are out there. It is good to know there is assistance available."



Doug
Major County

Farm Visit — An Oklahoma AgrAbility staff member will travel to the clients home, farm and/or ranch to assess living situations and potential modifications.



Frank
Kiowa County

"AgrAbility is a success because I am mobile again. I can do things myself, without relying on others. I can get things done when I want. Without AgrAbility I would still be relying on others to get things done on my farm."

Farm Revisits — The Oklahoma AgrAbility Project strives to provide clients with a wonderful experience. AgrAbility staff returns to client's farm or ranch to ensure modifications are functioning properly.

"AgrAbility is a success because 99 percent of people do still have a good heart, regardless of our world's issues. When people realize what AgrAbility is doing for farmers and ranchers they will appreciate it."



Hobert
Pushmataha County





AgrAbility events - March and April

- March 19, OSU at the Oklahoma Youth Expo, Oklahoma City
- March 29 & 30, Arthritis Foundation Leader Training, Stillwater
- March 31 - April 2, Oklahoma Workforce Partners Conference, Oklahoma City
- April 7, People with Disabilities Awareness Day at the Capitol, Oklahoma City
- April 13, Oklahoma AgrAbility Advisory Council Meeting, Stillwater
- April 16 & 17, Stillwater Mill – Stillwater Appreciation Day, Stillwater
- April 21, DASNR Day at the Capitol, Oklahoma City
- April 27 & 28, State FFA Convention, Oklahoma City
- April 29, Samuel Roberts Noble Foundation Progressive Farmer Safety Day, Ardmore

In the news: Spotlight on Oklahoma AgrAbility

- Oklahoma Living* - AgrAbility Project helps those with disabilities stay on the farm, feature on page 11
- Farm Talk* - AgrAbility getting farmers back in the field
- High Plains Journal* - Oklahoma AgrAbility Project assists farmers and ranchers

About Oklahoma AgrAbility

Oklahoma AgrAbility connects farmers and ranchers with disabilities to resources about ways to continue success in their enterprise, operation and daily life activities. Call AgrAbility at 888-885-5588 (voice/tty) or e-mail ability@okstate.edu for more information.

About this newsletter



This is a quarterly publication available via mail, e-mail and the Web at www.agrability.okstate.edu. For more information about this newsletter please contact AgrAbility at 888-885-5588 (voice/tty) or e-mail ability@okstate.edu.

SPRING friendly resources

For information about preparing for sprayer applications, good nutrition and physical activities, and understanding long-term care issues, visit the resource page at <http://agrability.okstate.edu/ResourceCenter.html>.

access to Agriculture is provided by the Oklahoma AgrAbility Project, 211 Agricultural Hall, Stillwater, OK 74078; 405-744-2398; www.agrability.okstate.edu.

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PERMIT NO. 191

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