

Farmer SUCCESS Spotlight Focuses on: David & Dianne

Dianne and her husband, David, live and farm on 21 acres in northeast Oklahoma where they raise milk goats and have built their “U-pick” agribusiness called Bucket of Berries, which provides Oklahomans with fresh produce including strawberries, raspberries, blueberries, and blackberries. Dianne and David enjoyed building their Bucket of Berries agribusiness, raising their goats and vermiculture, and growing their produce until it became difficult for them to maintain their operation.

David has a diagnosis of scoliosis, arthritis, hernia, and diabetes, and he experiences neck pain from injuries and obstacles to his mobility. Dianne also experiences uncomfortable sensations from impaired vision and pain in her lower back and knees, especially when attempting to complete her daily activities. These activities may include walking, kneeling, and carrying—essential tasks for any Oklahoma farmers and agribusiness builders, but especially for Dianne and David with their 10,000 different berry plants to take care of. Dianne and David needed the aid of assistive technologies to keep growing their agribusiness and tending their livestock and berries.



We at AgrAbility introduced Dianne and David to our friends at the Oklahoma Assistive Technology Foundation and the Department of Rehabilitation Services. The OkAT Assistive Technology Grant for Farmers provided David with a mobility-enhancing cart so that he can safely travel his 21 acres. DRS provided additional assistive technologies, including a goat-milking machine, water wheel planter, tractor bale spikes, and mulch lifter among others for David. As for Dianne, DRS was able to provide her with a high-wheeled cultivator weeder, tractor scooter seat, ergonomic garden tools, home modifications, and many more.

With the help of OkAT, DRS, and the assistive technologies that these partners provided, Dianne and David can continue growing their operation, adding goat milk-based production, honey bees, sheep, and pumpkins to their agricultural production.

AgriTourism lists Bucket of Berries on its map of Oklahoma, identifying Dianne and David’s agribusiness as the provider of self-pick berry opportunities. Together with OkAT and DRS through AgrAbility, Dianne and David will be able to keep their spot on the map.



About Oklahoma AgrAbility

Oklahoma AgrAbility educates and connects agricultural families who are living with a disability with resources to secure assistive technologies for continued independence and success in their operation and daily life activities.





Oklahoma Extension: ARTHRITIS LAND EXERCISE UPDATE

AgrAbility, Oklahoma Cooperative Extension, and the Arthritis Foundation continue to partner to make Arthritis Land Exercise Instructor Training available to Family & Consumer Science Extension Educators. For almost four years now, AgrAbility has provided training opportunities to Educators so that the National Arthritis Foundation can certify them to hold classes in their communities across the state. "These classes are designed to help people manage their arthritis, increase activity, and lead more active lives through education and support," said Jan Johnston, Co-Director of Oklahoma AgrAbility and Extension State Specialist in gerontology.



OkAT Assistive Technology Grant

OkAT provides low-interest bank loans for individuals who need specific adaptations and modifications, such as modified farm equipment, assistive technology, or home modifications.

For more details or to see if you qualify, please call 888-885-5588.



Oklahoma ABLE Tech Device Demonstration and Short-Term Loan Program

Oklahoma ABLE Tech, in partnership with 10 other organizations, operates an assistive technology (AT) device demonstration and short-term loan program to increase accessibility and utilization of AT. The program is available to Oklahomans with disabilities, their family members, and the professionals who support them. The program allows individuals with disabilities to "try before you buy" to make sure the device is right.

For more information, call 405-744-9748 or toll free at 888-885-5588 (v/tty) or visit the website at okabletech.okstate.edu



Langston University

LANGSTON UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF PHYSICAL THERAPY

Coming Soon...

Students of the Doctor of Physical Therapy Program at Langston University will participate in a two-day course presented by Oklahoma AgrAbility staff. The course will focus on supporting farmers and ranchers during their rehabilitation process and identifying appropriate assistive technology devices and work modifications that will reduce obstacles and barriers farmers and ranchers may experience while completing work-related tasks. Students will experience a variety of disabling conditions, as well as learn about appropriate accommodations and potential funding sources.



OKLAHOMA FFA FOUNDATION

Get ready for the Oklahoma FFA Association's 87th state convention! Themed "Grow Like That," festivities will begin April 30th and conclude May 1st. Each day will be packed with fun, learning, and a little friendly competition.

For additional questions, contact the Oklahoma FFA Foundation at 405-743-5496 or visit the Oklahoma FFA website at www.okffa.org.



CONNECTING YOUTH, AGRICULTURE,
and ACCOMMODATIONS

Sandra Stevenson, Assistive Technology Professional and Program Manager for Oklahoma AgrAbility, conducted a hands-on, interactive training for six 4-H Club members and six adults in Delaware County in conjunction with Family Consumer Sciences Educator, Barbara Denney, and 4-H/Youth Educator, Debra Gaines, on February 13. Participants learned about proper disability etiquette, people-first language, and simple grip accommodations. Each practiced tailoring grips for garden tools, hammers, and created their own make'n'take pencil grip.



Nothing can stop this alpaca!



Meet Cornucopia. She is 12 years old and lives at Zena Suri Alpacas, an alpaca ranch that boards, trades, and does all things alpaca. When Cornucopia was two years old, veterinarians discovered that she had two broken bones in her foot/ankle. After the doctors removed her left foreleg, she insisted on walking with her remaining three and a half legs. Cornucopia's persistence was dangerous to the remaining parts of her left leg and other parts of her body.

After numerous attempts and trials for Cornucopia's limp replication and prosthesis, Cornucopia finally was introduced to Dave, Beverly, and Andy Helms at Grand Prosthetics & Orthotics in Grove, Oklahoma. The Helms, each American Board certified prosthetists, own and operate Grand Prosthetics & Orthotics, serving those in need for over 40 years. Grand Prosthetics, with their expertise and quality care, was able to fit Cornucopia for a functional yet lightweight piece that allows Cornucopia the freedom and comfort she needs to live her active lifestyle. Now the Helms continue to check up with Cornucopia, making sure that she doesn't miss a beat. With the help from Grand Prosthetics & Orthotics, Cornucopia—able to run with her herd and leap with glee—might be a mama one day. She may even become a show alpaca—if her caregivers at Zena Suri Alpacas can keep her still long enough.

Assistive Technology **TIP SHARE**

"Gardening is an important part of rural life," says Ron Hilliard, Oklahoma NRCS conservationist. Ron, together with the NRCS People's Garden Project, recently introduced his concept of "D" Therapy to Oklahoma. "D" stands for Dirt and Direct sunlight.

Ron's mission was to bring the land back to many of the retired ranchers and farmers residing in retirement homes and assisted living centers away from their original homes. The "D" Therapy gardens are raised beds, which are more accessible. Ron's "D" Therapy gardens can help reduce obstacles, so you can get your hands dirty!



Natural Resources Conservation

Natural Resources Conservation Service is the primary Federal agency which works with private landowners to help them protect their natural resources. NRCS partners to coordinate research programs, develop conservation technology, and provide information and outreach.

NRCS serves people who work the land. Farmers and ranchers determine their own needs suited to their own land. Other rural and urban communities may help conserve and protect water and enhance fish and wildlife habitat. NRCS partners with many other state and Federal agencies including the USDA to help achieve its mission.

People of AgrAbility: Sharon Burnett



Sharon Burnett is a member of the Advisory Council with Oklahoma AgrAbility as well as a team member at NRCS. She has been working for NRCS just about a year now, having begun her career with NRCS since March 2012.

At NRCS, Sharon works behind the scenes and makes things happen for those out in the field. Specifically, Sharon works closely with veterans and individuals with disabilities as part of her contribution to the program. She also provides the administrative support for those working in northeast Oklahoma. She stays busy serving 20 different offices in 20 different counties, ensuring that NRCS' technicians and engineers have the tools and support that they need to focus on their jobs while traveling Oklahoma and protecting its natural resources. With Sharon's help, the people at NRCS play an important role in preserving and protecting Oklahomans and their land.





On the Horizon: AgrAbility Events

Assistive Technology In-service OT/PT

April 1, 2013

University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center
Tulsa/Oklahoma City, OK

National Training Workshop

April 8-11, 2013

Minneapolis, MN

Arthritis Foundation Land Exercise Classes

Every Tuesday/Thursday

April 23-May 30, 2013

OSU Department of Wellness

Colvin Center, Stillwater, OK

Horticulture Therapy Expo

April 24, 2013

Oklahoma City, OK



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