

SUMMER 2019



Project News



CONTENTS

4 PROJECT DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

Dr. Sonja Koukel welcomes you to learn more about the New Mexico AgrAbility Project (NMAP) and the role of the project partners.

6 ARE YOU STAYING SUN SMART?

Staying hydrated is one smart idea for dealing with the summer heat out in the field, but there are other strategies too. Read more about how to stay healthy when the New Mexico weather is blistering.

8 PARTNER UPDATES

NMAP Partner's give updates on how they are promoting success for people with health challenges who are working in agriculture.

12 TECH CORNER

Here's a nifty column to learn about featured technology items that help people work smarter, not harder.

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BEST IN THE WORLD

PROJECT DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

*NMAP has a core mission
of promoting success in
agriculture*

Thank you for reviewing our first New Mexico AgrAbility Program (NMAP) newsletter. Our team is excited for the opportunity to bring this nationally recognized program to our NM residents.

NMAP has a core mission of promoting success in agriculture for farmers, ranchers, food growers and workers, and the family members impacted by disability issues. Our four-year project (2018 – 2022) is funded through the United States Department of Agriculture National Institute of Food and Agriculture (USDA NIFA). NMAP provides key services in education, networking, and direct assistance through the cooperation of several partners who are experts in their field. The purpose for this initial newsletter is to introduce you to the partners and their involvement in the project.

We invite you to meet the New Mexico AgrAbility Project Team!!

Sonja Koukel, PhD, Professor/Extension Health Specialist. As the Project Director, Sonja provides leadership to the team to ensure adherence to the work plan. She is responsible for reporting to USDA NIFA and sharing information with the National AgrAbility Program.

Paul Gutierrez, PhD, Professor/Extension Agricultural and Business Management Specialist. Paul brings his networking leadership to the project through his work with rural community development and outreach to Native American and Hispanic agriculture producers, as well as, farmers and ranchers.

Bryce Jorgenson, PhD, Assistant Professor/Extension Family Resource Management Specialist. Bryce serves as the project evaluator.

Eduardo Medina, Master of Agriculture specializing in Agribusiness (MAG-AB). As the program assistant, Eduardo assists in promoting NMAP and serves as the main point of contact.

Carla Wilhite, OTD, Assistant Professor/Occupational Therapist. Carla brings 19 years of experience in providing AgrAbility services and previously managed AgrAbility programs in Colorado and Oklahoma. A researcher focused on farmer health issues, her involvement with NMAP involves providing leadership, educating project participants, and supervising occupational therapy students' fieldwork.

Craig Charlton, AgrAbility occupational therapy intern. Craig is a graduate student at the University of New Mexico-Occupational Therapy Graduate Program.

Tracy Agiovlasis, Director of the New Mexico Technology Assistance Program (NMTAP)/Program Coordinator. Tracy, a Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN), shares her extensive knowledge and expertise in disability issues and assistive technology as an educator for the project activities.

Jesse Armijo, BA, ATP, AT Coordinator for the New Mexico Technology Assistance Program. Jesse assists in worksite assessments to the farmers and ranchers throughout the state of New Mexico. He also works with the AgrAbility Specialist and the UNM occupational therapy students.

Melissa McCue, Bachelor's in Human Rehabilitation Services and Communications Disorders and is a Fellow with the Center for Development and Disability, University of New Mexico. Melissa is the Director of Mandy's Farm/Program Coordinator. She contributes to program development of the Apprenticeship Program, assists in meeting the goals of the work plan, and provides reports to NMSU. Mandy's Farm is the non-profit partner.

April Cox, Associate's Degree in Integrated Studies. April brings extensive experience in agricultural management. She developed, designed, and leads the implementation of the NMAP Apprenticeship Program that provides information for farmers' wanting to learn about adaptive practices and those looking for assistance so they can return to their work.

Jessie Calero, BA, MA in Education. Jessie brings experience within adult programming for individuals with developmental disabilities. She has developed, designed, and implemented new programs across all departments during her time at Mandy's Farm. Jessie serves as the Development Director.

Cordially,
Sonja Koukel
NMAP Program Director



Photo Courtesy United States
Department of Agriculture-
Public domain

View the project YouTube video:

https://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=NM+AgrAbility+Program

Questions about the program?
Wish to refer a farmer, rancher,
food grower or food worker?
Contact Us!

Eduardo Medina
Program Assistant
Toll Free: 1-800-289-6577
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ARE YOU STAYING SUN SMART?

NMSU Student Intern, Rachel Turner

Sweating cools the body. When you don't sweat, your body temperature can rise to dangerous levels. Getting too hot can make you sick. This is known as heat stress. This article discusses types of heat stress and ways you can protect yourself from getting sick.

Types of heat stress:

- Dehydration
- Heat exhaustion
- Heat cramps
- Heat syncope (fainting)
- Heat rash
- Heat stroke

Dehydration occurs when the body loses water and the water is not replaced by drinking fluids or eating foods that contain water. Our bodies get out of balance when too much water is lost. Serious dehydration can lead to death.

Signs of dehydration:

- Dry mouth
- Feeling very thirsty
- Feeling dizzy or confused
- Not being able to sweat

Heat exhaustion and dehydration often go hand in hand. When you get dehydrated and stay in the heat for a long time, you can get heat exhaustion. Heat exhaustion is most common in the elderly, in people who work outdoors, and people with high blood pressure.

Some signs of heat exhaustion:

- Heavy sweating
- Skin feels cold, wet, and sticky
- Muscle cramps (pains)
- Feeling very weak or tired
- Pale skin
- Feeling sick to your stomach (nausea)
- Vomiting
- Very fast heartbeat

Heat cramps are body pains that can happen when you do heavy exercises, activities, or hard work in hot conditions. Dehydration can cause heat cramps. Muscle pain or spasms (sudden, strong muscle tightening or painful twists) in the stomach area, arms, or legs are the most common signs. Heat cramps may also be a sign of heat exhaustion.

Heat syncope is a type of heat illness. A sign of heat syncope is when you are working or playing in the heat and begin to feel dizzy or like you are going to faint.

Heat rash is a group of red pimples or small blisters on the neck and upper chest, underneath breasts, or around the groin area. Too much sweating when you work or play in the heat or in damp, moist weather causes the rash.

Heat stroke is very serious. Heat stroke happens when your body temperature rises very fast and you cannot cool down. The normal body temperature is 98.6 degrees F. Heat stroke can cause the body temperature to rise to 106 degrees F or higher in just 10 to 15 minutes.

Signs of heat stroke:

- Confusion
- Chills or feeling cold
- Loss of awareness (consciousness)
- Fits of uncontrolled movements (convulsions)
- Coma



Photos: Creative Commons

CAUTION
Heat stroke can cause permanent disability or death. Get emergency medical help immediately.

Call 911

Prevent heat stress

- Drink fluids, such as water and sports drinks, before and when you are working or playing in the heat.
- Wear light-colored, loose clothing.
- Try to stay out of the sun during the hottest time of the day. This is between 10:00 am and 4:00 pm.
- Go to a cool place when you feel overheated.

STAYING HYDRATED

Keeping in mind the aging farmer or rancher, the following recommendations will help prevent and treat dehydration during warm summer months:

- Setting reminders or alarms to take rest and water breaks at least every 2 hours
- Keeping a variety of beverages available
- Keeping water or other beverages and drinking glasses in all frequently-used areas of the home (such as by the bed, in the TV room, and in the dining room) and ranch (barn, etc.)
- Having small, portable bottles of water available to take with you on any outdoor excursion or errand, and larger water bottles available for longer times spent outside or in heat
- Setting a goal to drink a full glass of water with each meal of the day
- Setting a goal to drink water anytime you feel thirsty

H2O ADVICE: DRINK WATER

Craig Charlton,
Occupational Therapy
Student Intern

Summertime in New Mexico means many things for the farmer or rancher. The spring winds ease up. The days are longer. Longer days of sunlight mean longer days of work outdoors in the sun. The summer rainy season is welcomed by the thirsty land. The daily temperatures often rise above 90 degrees Fahrenheit, signifying a bigger risk of dehydration (loss of water in the body). For New Mexicans all across the state, it is important to stay hydrated. Those who work outdoors in the sun need to drink more water.

Humans naturally lose water every day due to sweating, breathing, and passing liquid in body waste. We also naturally take in water when we drink liquids and eat fresh foods or foods made and served with liquids. Dehydration is the result of low levels of water in the body. Because every cell in the body needs water to be at an optimal level, loss of water can affect the entire body, like muscles, the nervous system, and brain.

Dehydration can be dangerous. Severe dehydration can lead to death if nothing is done to stop it.

Being older can also increase risk of dehydration. An older person may have less muscle. Muscle stores a lot of water in the body. Also, some medicines, or number of medicines can increase dehydration. For example, a medicine may affect being able to feel thirsty.

Older adults who have trouble moving and walking may have a harder time getting to water. Those with memory issues may not remember to drink water. Additionally, some older adults cut down on drinking liquids in the evening to avoid needing to use the bathroom at night.

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) *Heat Illness Prevention* campaign is made up of three words: **Water, Rest, Shade**. Most sources recommend that all adults take in 2-3 quarts of water per day in order to maintain a healthy level of water in the body.

People working in agriculture in the southwest may need to drink more water. This is because of the high summer temperatures and being in the sun. In addition to drinking water, OSHA recommends taking resting breaks out of the sun. Generally a person should get 15 minutes of rest for every 2 hours worked.

Getting into the shade during a break is a good idea. It lowers the heat caused by the sun. Sun heat is caused by thermal radiation and is hotter than the air temperature.

All of these actions help the body cool down and helps prevent additional water loss in sweating.

Promoting success in agriculture

PARTNER UPDATES

NMSU



New Mexico State University Cooperative Extension, with Extension agents in all 33 NM counties, has the capacity to move reliable and evidence-based information out to consumers for use in living satisfying and high-quality lives in rural, agricultural, and urban areas.

Extension agents live and work in the communities they serve, and through their networks, can serve as a resource for linking interested/eligible individuals to the NMAP.

NMAP plans to work with the NM Tribal Extension Program to deliver community-based education to the state's 23 Native American tribes. This outreach involves both educational and training programs.

Further, Extension State Specialists are resources for research-based information. Specialists can assist NMAP in addressing identified educational and training needs through



Cattle at windmill, photo courtesy C. Wilhite

through fact sheets, circulars, guides, media-based delivery, and informal presentations.

NMSU will host and assist in the development of mobile and web content; manage the branding, promotion, and marketing; and engage in marketing and promoting NMAP to farmers, ranchers, and others.

Most importantly, NMSU will serve as the critical foundation for all the partners' mutual activities for team building, coordination, and driving the mission of the project.

Mr. Eduardo Medina will serve as NMSU NMAP Program Assistant to maximize the impact of AgrAbility deliverables.

Top: Tracy Agiovlastis talking about the objectives of how NMAP can be of service to farmers and ranchers in NM. Bottom: Group of people looking at types of AT available.

NMTAP



The New Mexico Technology Assistance Program, one partner of the NM AgrAbility Project, has two primary roles in the grant. One is to provide training statewide on Assistive Technology (AT) or adapted farming strategies specific to farmers and ranchers.

We will be providing a training in Farmington, NM on Tuesday, August 20, 2019. This will be held at the San Juan Center for Independence from 9:00am-12:30pm. It will include an introduction to AgrAbility services available to agricultural workers throughout NM along with some AT that can ease the work of farmers or ranchers with arthritis, age related challenges and disabilities. Our goal is to keep our food producers feeding us!!

HANDS-ON WORKSHOP of ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY (HOW-AT)

WHEN:

August 20th, 2019 - 9:00 am - 12:30 pm

WHO:

Farmers, ranchers, school teachers, family members, therapists and other professionals working with farmers or individuals with disabilities

WHERE:

San Juan Center for Independence
1204 San Juan Blvd. Farmington, NM
87401



The second role is to provide direct assistance to food producers and their families across NM. We are available to work with farmers/ranchers to assess helpful AT available and find solutions specific to their individual efforts and processes. Our staff will come to the food producer's location to understand and discuss the challenges, helpful tools or practices to make it easier or safer, and help meet their goals to maintain or increase production.

Let us know if our AgrAbility Specialist can come to your next meeting or gathering to share information and provide a clearer picture of how we can help. We will soon have some sample farming tools you can try out to see how they might work for you.

Call us at 505-841-4464 for more information about working with the AgrAbility Specialist, schedule a training or to schedule a visit.



Farm interns work at Mandy's Farm; Students from CNM updating volunteering to update electrical at the farm

MANDY'S FARM



The AgrAbility Apprenticeship program kicked off in the heat of New Mexico's July. Summer is a hard time to start farming but has been a great introduction to some of the risks of working outside in the heat. We adjusted together to being outside in the heat and came up with strategies to keep ourselves safe, like lots of water, regular breaks in the shade, wearing clothes that cover our skin, and popsicles to end the day.

Our apprentices have jumped right into farming. We have milked goats, harvested fruit, cooked with our harvest, played harmonica, built trellises, identified pests, learned about a variety of irrigation methods, harvested vermicompost (worm farming), engaged in yoga, packed veggies and fruit for market, learned how to use a variety of tools, attended community classes together to learn about local produce varieties, germination, and saving seeds. growing season we are spending much of our days outside exploring different methods for planting, irrigating, and building soil.

Collectively, we are growing pumpkins, peppers, tomatoes, eggplant, strawberries, carrots, herbs, and a multitude of sunflowers.

Each of the apprentices has shown unique interests in farming and we are learning how to identify other resources when learning to farm. Our apprentices are excited for the opportunity to explore their interest in farming in an environment that is built around their unique abilities. We currently have 5 apprentices enrolled in the program and are still seeking more.

If you have an interest in joining the AgrAbility apprenticeship program at Mandy's Farm please contact April Cox, april@mandysfarm.org, 505-503-1141 x7065

UNM-OTGP



The summer has been busy for the University of New Mexico-Occupational Therapy Graduate Program (OTGP). The first occupational therapy fieldwork student is working at the New Mexico Technology Assistance Program under the supervision of one of the program's faculty. Faculty, OT Student, and an Assistive Technology Practitioner made the FIRST official farm visit in July, meeting with a New Mexico farmer in the western part of the state.

The team will travel anywhere in New Mexico to make farm visits and work directly with the farmer, rancher, or food grower to identify strategies for working with disabilities, health challenges, or aging issues. Strategies include using assistive technology or modifying the work environment.

Additionally, UNM-OTGP and New Mexico State University (NMSU) were contacted by colleagues at Colorado State University Extension (CSU) to partner on a grant proposal to the United States Department of Agriculture to fund a Farm and Ranch Stress Assistance Network (FRSAN) in the Western Region.

If funded, the New Mexico university partners would assist CSU in mapping out all the available mental and behavioral health resources in the multi-state region and other support organizations that provide assistance to agricultural



UNM Faculty and UNM OT Student observing field conditions

producers during times of stress, like agricultural mediation.

The need for the program has become very evident across the United States as agricultural producers have faced the brunt of unprecedented drought, floods, fires, and ecological disruption in the ocean impacting fisheries.

Additional activities of the proposal include bringing Iowa farmer and psychologist Mike Rossman, from AgriWellness to New Mexico to train mental and behavioral health providers about working with agricultural producers, workers, and their families.

Other partners in the proposal include New Mexico, Arizona, Montana, and Wyoming Department's of Agriculture, AgriWellness, and AgriSafe (a national nonprofit farm safety organization based in Louisiana).

TECHNOLOGY CORNER

FROM THE NATIONAL AGRABILITY TOOLBOX

South Dakota rancher Bill Gottsleben's Portable ATV/UTV Drive-Thru Gate is designed to tie in to any fence. The vehicle pushes the hinged gate to the ground for drive-over. The steel-tubed, self-standing frame is designed both wide and tall enough to accommodate a side-by-side UTV and the cab on a UTV. The hinge being on the bottom of the frame lets the gate open from both directions, and rubber belting on the top of the frame keeps the gate from swinging back and forth when it returns to upright position.

Bill's Gate Manufacturing, LLC
21176 East Grindstone Road
Philip, SD, 57567
Website: <https://tinyurl.com/bills-gate>
Phone 605-685-3220
Est. Cost \$450



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