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Program Manager/ Rural Rehabilitative Specialist

# GOALS

- ▶ Introduce the Nebraska AgrAbility Project
- ▶ Provide examples of how AgrAbility has helped disabled farmers in Nebraska

# LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- ▶ Introduce AgrAbility to health care providers as a resource for farmers and ranchers with disabilities.
- ▶ Evaluate the Services available through AgrAbility
- ▶ Recommend the type of referrals and the methods of referrals to AgrAbility

# VISION

- ▶ **AgrAbility serves Nebraska farmers and ranchers experiencing an illness or injury that limits their ability to perform routine tasks. We recommend creative solutions to continue working safely. This service provides hope by preserving an agricultural way of life.**



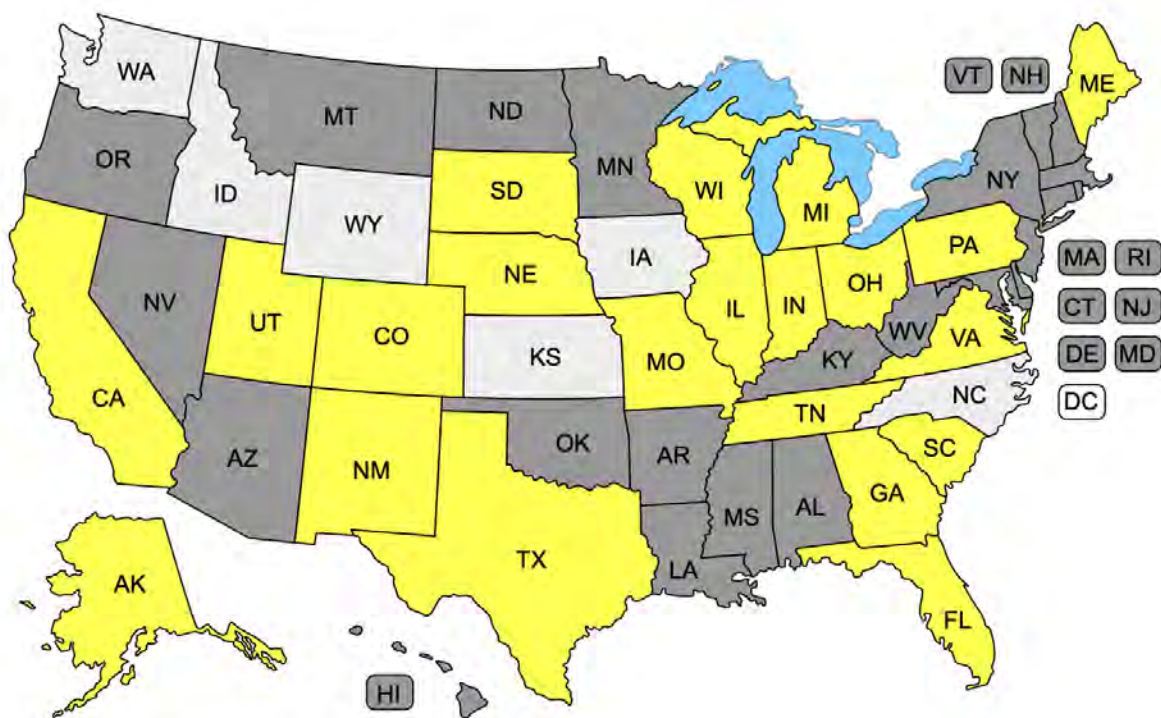
# SUCCESS MAY BE DEFINED AS

- ▶ *Gainful Employment* in production agriculture or a related occupation
- ▶ Access to *appropriate assistive technology* needed for work and daily living activities
- ▶ *Evidence-based information* related to treatment and rehabilitation of disabling conditions
- ▶ Targeted *support for family caregivers* of AgrAbility customers.

# NATIONAL AGRABILITY PROJECT

- ▶ First authorized in the 1990 Farm Bill
- ▶ USDA NIFA (National Institute of Food and Agriculture) competitive grants, awarded to cooperative Extension Services at 1862 and 1890 land-grant universities and a non-profit disability organization
  - ▶ Nebraska Extension
  - ▶ Easterseals Nebraska
- ▶ Nebraska's project was first authorized in 1995, and has been reauthorized every four years since





STATE/REGIONAL PROJECT

AFFILIATE PROJECT

NO PROJECT

### Additional Contact Information

[National Agrability Project](#)

[USDA Project Administration](#)

[U.S. Territories](#)

## AgrAbility State Contact List

# NEBRASKA AGRABILITY PROJECT PARTNERS

- ▶ Land Grant University
  - ▶ University of Nebraska Lincoln- Extension
- ▶ Disability Organization
  - ▶ Easterseals Nebraska



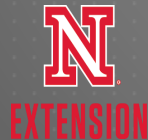


# NEBRASKA EXTENSION & EASTERSEALS NEBRASKA

## ▶ Program Areas

- ▶ Beef Systems
- ▶ The Learning Child
- ▶ Community Environment
- ▶ Community Vitality
- ▶ Cropping & Water Systems
- ▶ Food, Nutrition, & Health
- ▶ 4-H Youth Development

## ▶ UNL Extension



## ▶ Their mission: to create solutions that change the lives of children and adults with disabilities.

- ▶ Nebraska AgrAbility
- ▶ Alternative Financing
- ▶ Employment Services and Benefits Planning
- ▶ Public Education
- ▶ Camp, Respite, and Recreation

## ▶ Easterseals Nebraska



# PRIORITIES OF AGRABILITY

- ▶ *Develops service capacity* through innovative educational programs designed to advance individual capabilities, adapt new technologies, and deliver program content through appropriate educational venues
- ▶ *Encourages networking* to facilitate information sharing, the provision of services, and funding from individuals or organizations not employed by AgrAbility
- ▶ *Provides direct services* to agricultural workers through individual consultations and other means

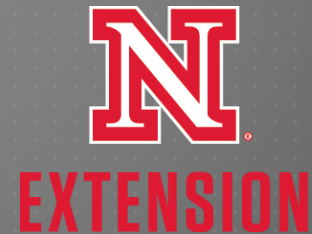
# THE BREAKDOWN OF PRIORITY AREAS

## ▶ Easterseals Nebraska

- ▶ Client Services
- ▶ Education/Outreach
- ▶ Network

## ▶ Nebraska Extension

- ▶ Education/Outreach
- ▶ Networking



# A FEW HEALTH CONDITIONS WE SERVE

- ▶ Stroke
- ▶ Arthritis
- ▶ Diabetes
- ▶ Amputation
- ▶ Orthopedic Injury
- ▶ Spinal Cord Injury
- ▶ Back Pain or Injury
- ▶ Mobility Limitations
- ▶ Vision or Hearing Loss
- ▶ Traumatic Brain Injury
- ▶ Respiratory & Cardiac Problems



# EDUCATION

- ▶ Build service capacity by educating health, agriculture, and government service providers
- ▶ What do we teach?
  - ▶ OT/PT Workshop: Rehabilitating Nebraska Farmers and Ranchers with Disabilities
  - ▶ OT Students (1 week or 16 weeks)
  - ▶ Reaching out to Consumers
  - ▶ Safety Days = Prevention
    - ▶ ATV Safety
    - ▶ Tractor Safety
    - ▶ Sleep Deprivation
    - ▶ Disability Awareness





# NETWORKING

- ▶ Expand program capacity by sharing resources with and securing services from individuals and organizations
- ▶ Peer Activities
- ▶ AgrAbility Advisory Committee
- ▶ Temporary Assistive Technology





# ASSISTANCE

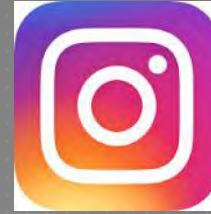
- ▶ Provide an on-farm consultative services and technical assistance to farmers/ranchers to increase likelihood of remaining in production agriculture.
- ▶ In 2024, Nebraska AgrAbility served 47 clients
- ▶ Since 1995 we have served over 600 clients



# MARKETING

- ▶ Build Capacity to Reach Farmers and Ranchers with Disabilities and Increase Public Awareness of AgrAbility and Its Services

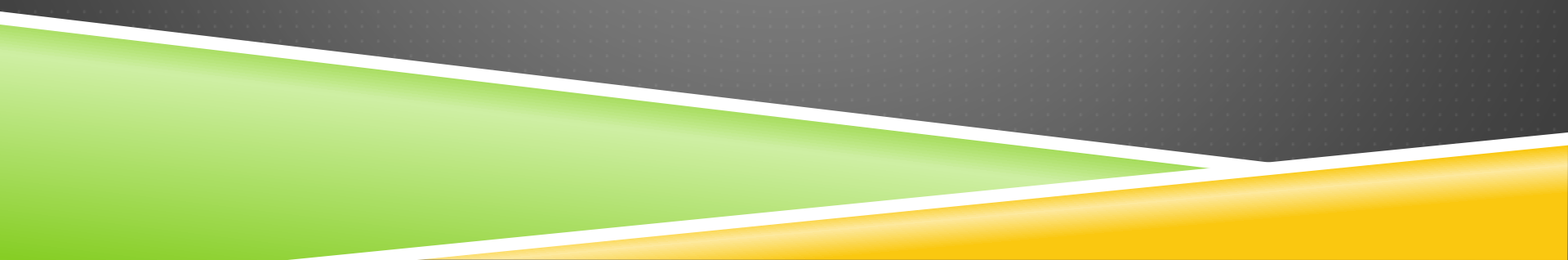
- ▶ Meetings Face to Face
- ▶ Printed Media
- ▶ Social Media
- ▶ Webpage
  - ▶ Nebraska AgrAbility
- ▶ Broadcast Media



# NEBRASKA AGRABILITY PROJECT PARTNERS

- ▶ Land Grant Partner: University of Nebraska-Lincoln Extension
  - ▶ Aaron Yoder, Environmental, Agricultural and Occupational Health, [aaron.yoder@unmc.edu](mailto:aaron.yoder@unmc.edu)
  - ▶ Jada Ruff, Extension Educator, [jruff@unl.edu](mailto:jruff@unl.edu)
  - ▶ Soni Cochran, Extension Associate, [scochran@unl.edu](mailto:scochran@unl.edu)
  - ▶ Ashley Ahrens, Extension Educator, [agoad2@unl.edu](mailto:agoad2@unl.edu)
- ▶ Nebraska Disability Organization: Easter Seals of Nebraska
  - ▶ Angie Howell, ESN Project Director, [ahowell@ne.easterseals.com](mailto:ahowell@ne.easterseals.com)
  - ▶ Emily Jacobson, Program Manager, [ejacobson@ne.easterseals.com](mailto:ejacobson@ne.easterseals.com)
  - ▶ John Davis, Rehab Specialist/On Call, [jdavis@ne.easterseals.com](mailto:jdavis@ne.easterseals.com)
  - ▶ Burton Pflueger, Rural Rehab Specialist, [bpflueger@ne.easterseals.com](mailto:bpflueger@ne.easterseals.com)

# WHO IS ELIGIBLE?

- ▶ Must be involved in, or pursuing employment in production agriculture
  - ▶ Must have a disability
    - ▶ Disabilities may be the result of injuries, or chronic health conditions, or illnesses that interfere with daily activities
  - ▶ Serve all Ages
  - ▶ Serve Men/Women
  - ▶ Serving Veterans
  
  - ▶ A farmer is defined as a person who is
    - ▶ Actively engaged in farming or ranching
    - ▶ Earns income from farming ranching
  - ▶ Will use “farmer” to refer to – farmers, ranchers, and/or farm workers
- 

# AGRABILITY DOES NOT

- ▶ DOES NOT PROVIDE

- ▶ Funding
- ▶ Equipment

- ▶ Potential Funding Sources for Agricultural Producers

- ▶ Charitable Organizations
- ▶ Easterseals Nebraska Alternative Loan Finance Program
- ▶ Nebraska VR
- ▶ Crowd Sourcing
- ▶ Government Agencies



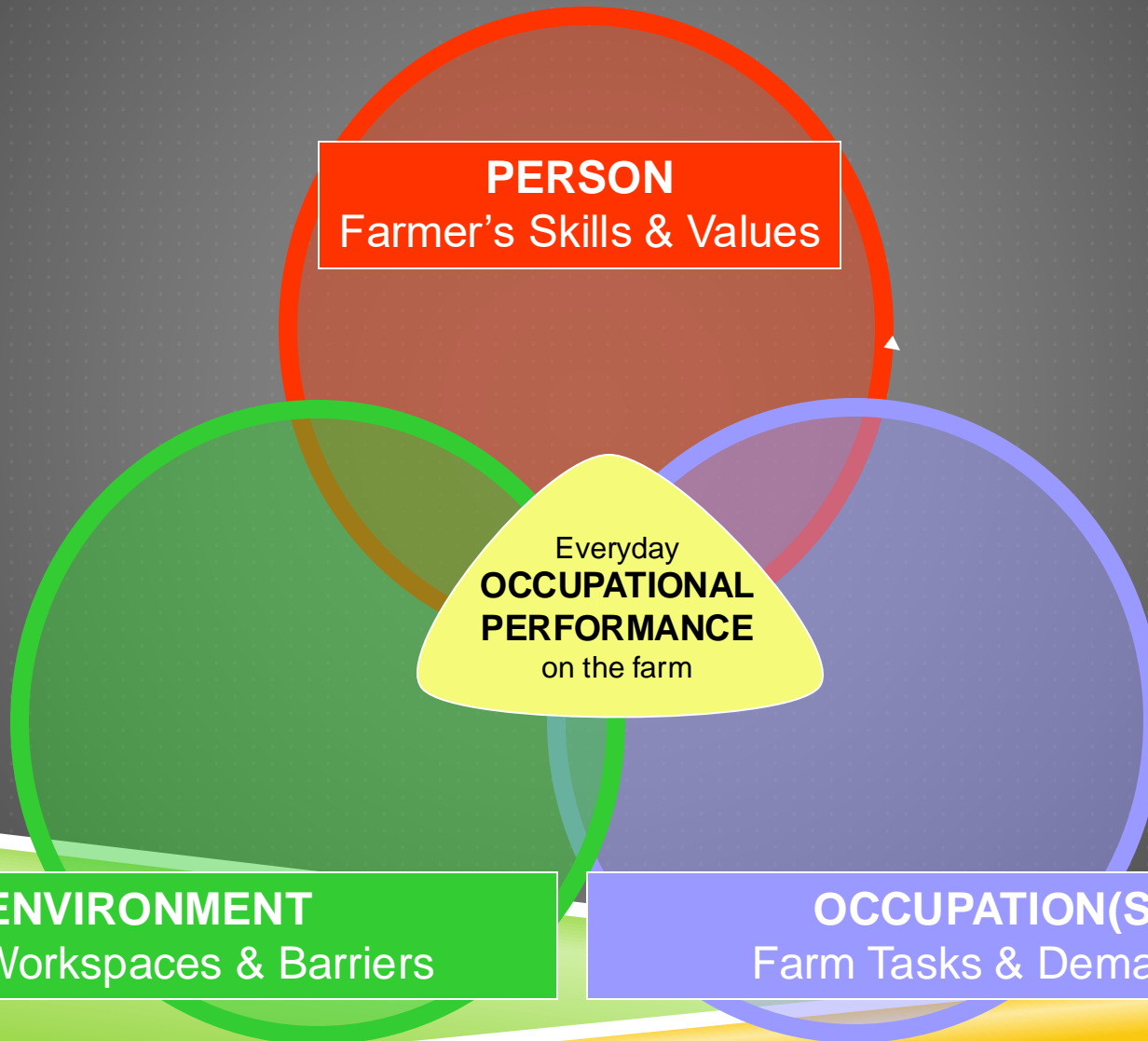
# PARTNERSHIPS

- ▶ Nebraska Vocational Rehabilitation Services: Nebraska VR
  - ▶ Nebraska VR
  - ▶ Nebraska Commission for the Blind & Visually Impaired
- ▶ Their goal is to help people with disabilities prepare for, find, and keep jobs.



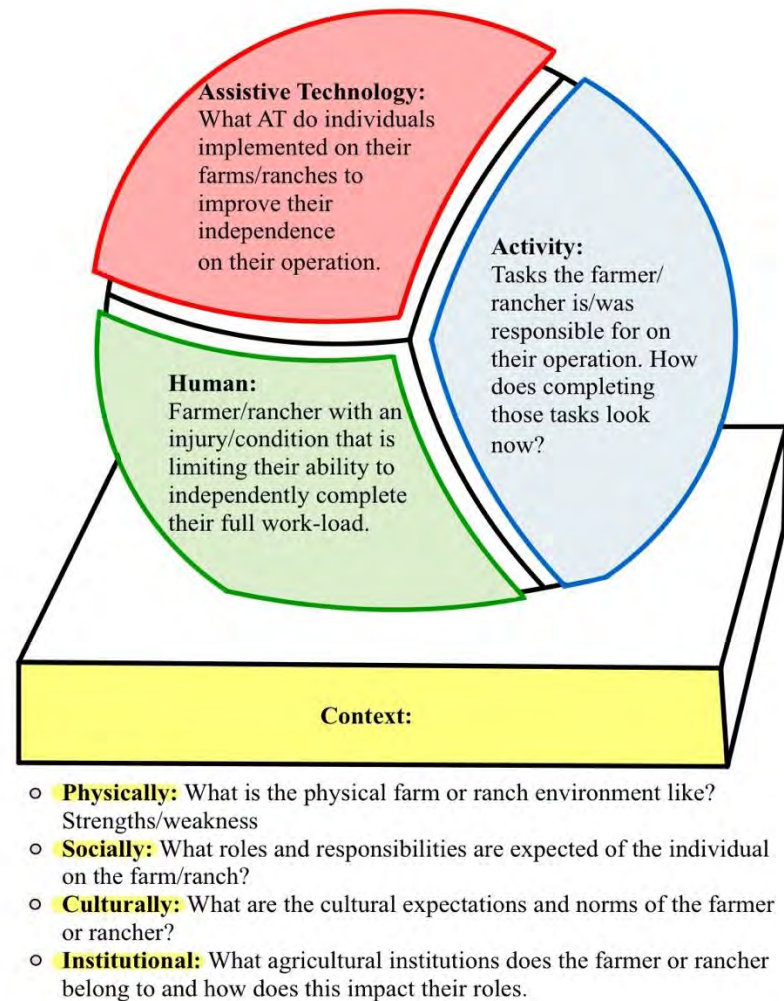


# PERSON-ENVIRONMENT-OCCUPATION



# Human Activity Assistive Technology

The model describes someone doing something in a context using AT. Consider what movements and abilities are available, what clients wants to achieve, the client's level of expertise, what environments the client wants to have control in, and the client priorities.



# WHAT DO WE DO?

- ▶ Recommend ways to remain active in agriculture by:
  - ▶ Modifying farm and ranch tasks
  - ▶ Adapting equipment
  - ▶ Educating on injury prevention
  - ▶ Providing financial guidance
  - ▶ Identifying funding sources
  - ▶ Coordinating community services
  - ▶ Increasing farmstead accessibility



# FARM SITE ASSESSMENT

Identifies the farmer's barriers to completing work tasks related to:

- Farmstead (buildings, workspaces, fields)
- Machinery
- Materials
- Livestock
- Tools

Completed by: \_\_\_\_\_  
Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Agricultural Worksite Assessment Tool for  
Farmers and Ranchers with Physical Disabilities**

**I. PERSONAL DATA**

**A. About the client**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ SSN: \_\_\_\_\_ Sex: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_ County: \_\_\_\_\_  
City/State/Zip: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of birth: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_  
Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Cell Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Fax: \_\_\_\_\_  
E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_  
Directions to farm/ranch: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Marital status: \_\_\_\_\_ Name of spouse: \_\_\_\_\_  
Names and ages of children at home: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Occupation:  
\_\_\_\_ Full-time farmer/rancher  
\_\_\_\_ Part-time farmer/rancher with primary income from farm/ranch  
\_\_\_\_ Part-time farmer/rancher with primary income from off-farm/ranch job  
\_\_\_\_ Farm spouse  
\_\_\_\_ Child dependent of farm/ranch family \_\_\_\_ Adult dependent of farm/ranch family  
\_\_\_\_ Farm/ranch employee  
\_\_\_\_ Migrant worker \_\_\_\_ Seasonal Worker  
\_\_\_\_ Agricultural business (type): \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

**B. About client's disability**

1. Type of disability: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of injury/diagnosis: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_  
2. Describe cause of disability: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
3. List any secondary disabilities: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

A-1

# FARM SITE ASSESSMENT

- ▶ Suggests strategies or solutions to safely complete work tasks safely while preventing secondary injuries
- ▶ General Assessment Tools
  - Interview: Identify what the farmer believes are barriers to completing his/her work
  - Observation: Observe the farmer completing work tasks on his/her farm.
  - Task analysis: “the process of analyzing the dynamic relationship between people and their occupations and environments”



# GENERAL ASSESSMENT TOOLS

## ► Task Analysis Involves

- A step-by-step breakdown of work tasks
  - Physical requirements (e.g. lift 50 lbs.)
  - Performance requirements (e.g. lift 50 lbs. 5 times per hour)
  - Knowledge and skills
  - Tools and equipment
  - Safety considerations
  - Sensory, cognitive and psychological requirements involved in each task

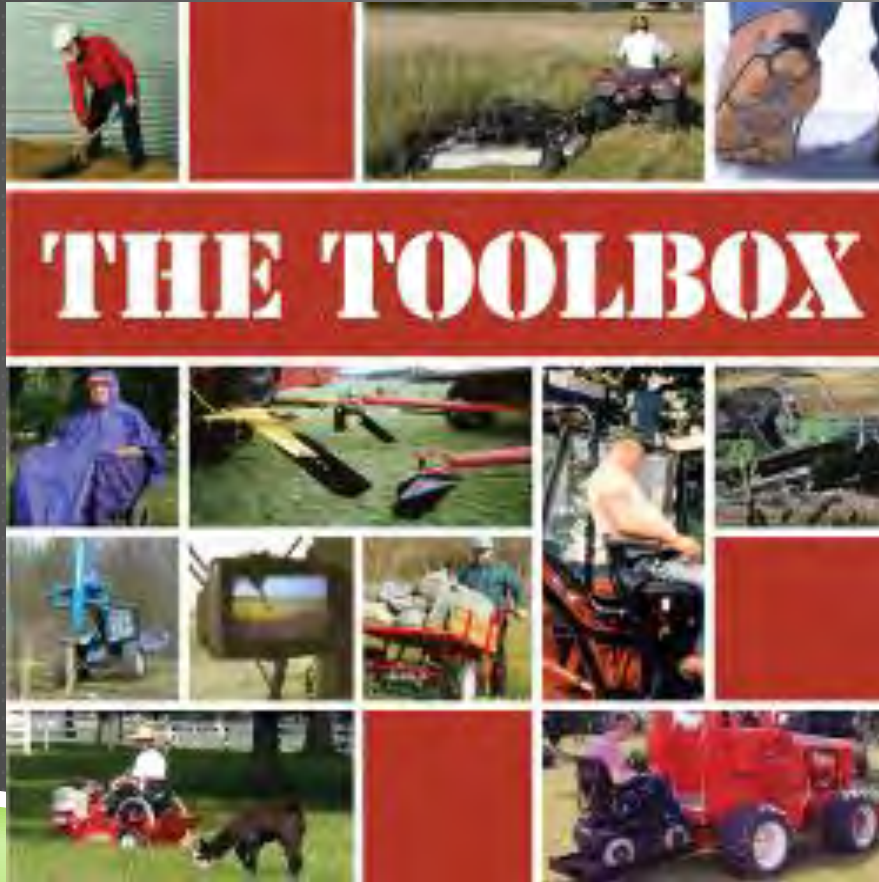


# ASSESSMENT TOOLS

- ▶ Assessment Questionnaire
- ▶ The Toolbox: Assistive Technology Base
  - ▶ [agrability.org/toolbox/](http://agrability.org/toolbox/)
- ▶ Disability Work Tools
- ▶ Veteran Resources
- ▶ Assistive Technology Partnership
- ▶ HELP Adult Services
- ▶ Catholic Charities



# ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY



- The Toolbox
  - Assistive Technology Database
    - Assistive Technology solutions for farmers, ranchers, and other agricultural workers with disabilities.
    - National AgrAbility Toolbox



# CALF CATCHER



# HYDRAULIC CHUTE SYSTEMS





# PORTABLE CORRAL



# PORTABLE TUB AND ALLEYWAY





# HYDRABED



# DART GUN

## MEDIDART VACCINATION CROSSBOW



# LIFTING AND CARRYING





# LIFTING & CARRYING



# SEED TENDER





# HYDRAULIC FLOOR JACK



# FLATBED LIFT



# HAND BRAKE AND CLUTCH CONTROLS



# EXTENDED STEPS AND HANDRAILS





# TRACTOR SEATING





# STEERING AND GUIDANCE



# OUTDOOR MOBILITY



# TRACK CHAIR



# GATE CLOSER





# FUELING STAND





# WILL: SPINAL CORD INJURY

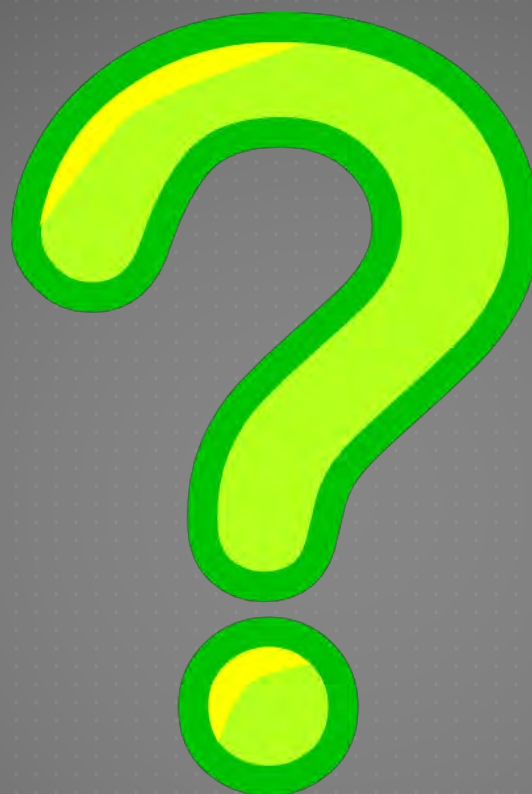
- ▶ “Where There’s a Will, There’s a Way!”
- ▶ <https://youtu.be/nqdxAtvMtEA>



# HOW TO REFER CLIENTS

- ▶ Refer to Nebraska AgrAbility by contacting us at
  - ▶ 800-471-6425
  - ▶ [neagrability@ne.easterseals.com](mailto:neagrability@ne.easterseals.com)
- ▶ Hand out Brochures
- ▶ Contact Emily
  - ▶ [ejacobson@ne.Easterseals.com](mailto:ejacobson@ne.Easterseals.com)
  - ▶ 402-718-1914
- ▶ Nebraska AgrAbility





# THANK YOU



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