



Promoting success in agriculture for farmers and ranchers with disabilities and their families



Newsletter

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- AgrAbility of Utah receives its fourth round of funding through a USDA competitive grant
- New Policy within the Utah State Office of Rehabilitation has resulted in thousands of dollars for assistive technology for farmers and ranchers
- New partnership brings new opportunities for farm and ranch

AgrAbility of Utah Secures Funding for Four More Years

AgrAbility is proud to announce that the program has secured funding for four more years.

AgrAbility is a nationwide program and is funded through a competitive grant from the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

AgrAbility of Utah received its first funding in 1998. Since then the program has successfully competed for funding to keep the program in the state.

AgrAbility of Utah competes for funding with states around the nation, including states in the Midwest where agriculture is an enormous contributor to their state's economy.

AgrAbility is delighted to partner with New Frontiers for Families (NFF), a nonprofit that focuses on providing wraparound services to those in rural areas. Together AgrAbility and NFF with human service and USDA programs create a system of shared resources to effectively

support farmers and ranchers.

AgrAbility of Utah is proud to support Utah's agriculturalists and looks forward to helping farmers, ranchers, and their families remain in agriculture.

*-Rhonda Miller, PhD
Executive Director
AgrAbility of Utah*

Rehabilitation and AgrAbility, A Partnership With the Power to Help

Developing effective partnerships with other agencies is critical to ensuring support for farmers and ranchers.

In 2010, AgrAbility worked closely with the Utah State Office of Rehabilitation (USOR) to develop a partnership that addresses the unique service needs of Utah's farmers and ranchers.

USOR or Vocational Rehabilitation is a federal program that helps individuals maintain, retain, or obtain employment, and increase their independence. A mission

which meshes well with that of AgrAbility's.

AgrAbility and USOR administrators developed a farm and ranch policy which simplifies the eligibility process and takes into account the unique cultural and financial circumstances of farmers and ranchers.

This collaboration provided over \$123,000 of assistive technology to farmers and ranchers with disabilities.

Examples include; a new tractor seat and suspension to alleviate back pain, a squeeze

chute to safely handle livestock and a UTV to help get around the farm. This collaboration provides unique solutions and tremendous opportunity for Utah's agriculturalists.

*- Luke Petersen
AgrAbility Program
Manager*



Many Hands Help Make Work Possible for Utah Family

Three tightly held values in American culture are; dedication to family, the pursuit of happiness, and the ability to participate in meaningful work. Enjoying a job well done can be one of life's greatest satisfactions.

For farmers, work and family are intricately related and their work is not only meaningful but incredibly productive. Collectively, Utah farmers represent three percent of the population and help generate 14.8 percent of the overall economy.

For Matt and Aimee Goble of Nephi, Utah, this February marks the one year anniversary of the purchase of their farm. Carrying on a generations old tradition in Matt's family, they now run 400 sheep in Juab and Sanpete Counties.

Matt and Aimee met at Snow College, and then moved to Utah State University where Matt studied agricultural systems technology, and Aimee studied horticulture and general education. After graduation, they moved back to Matt's hometown to raise their family.



Above: Matt, Aimee and Kate Goble

Together they have two children, Kate who is 2 1/2 years old and Mattie who is 8 1/2 months old.

Kate has Aicardi Syndrome, a rare genetic disease which results from partial or complete absence of a key structure in the brain called the corpus colosum. The corpus colosum is the 'bridge' between the right and left hemispheres of the brain. As a result of this syndrome Kate experiences vision problems and seizures.

Matt and Aimee are proud of their daughter and dedicate much of their time to ensuring Kate's needs are met. Like many young families, the Gobles struggle to make ends meet. This struggle is compounded

by having a child with disabilities. Matt maintains full-time off farm employment, while Aimee stays at home and cares for the children.

Matt and Aimee hope to involve their children on the farm as much as possible and make no exceptions for Kate.

The Goble family became involved with the AgrAbility project in the fall of 2010. A family friend and occupational therapist, Charity Davis suggested they call AgrAbility and see what help may be available to support their family.

AgrAbility met with the Goble's at their home. Just prior to the visit, Kate had been hospitalized for aspiration-breathing stoppage caused by fluids draining into her lungs. Matt and Aimee reported they had recently been dropped from medical help through Medicaid. The unique and complex nature of farm finances

and assets was making application to reinstate this support difficult.

Being able to cover essential care for

Kate was vital

for the family and their business to remain viable. Medical costs are the leading cause of bankruptcy in the U.S. and access to treatment is essential to Kate's survival.

AgrAbility linked the Gobles with Christine Rich, a medicaid eligibility specialist in Logan's workforce services office. Christine works with AgrAbility clients, helping them navigate the Medicaid system.

With her guidance, the family was able to successfully reinstate Medicaid support and have much of Kate's hospitalization costs covered.

While addressing healthcare needs was a successful collaboration in itself, complex problems are generally not solved with one solution.

*"Just one of Kate's medications for her seizures cost \$3,000 per month. Even with Matt's insurance covering a portion of the cost it is still very expensive."
-Aimee Goble*

Below: Kate observing the sheep herd.



Many Hands Help Make Work Possible for Utah Family (Continued)

AgrAbility conducts comprehensive assessment to provide holistic solutions. Matt and Aimee were connected with Lois Summers from the Utah Assistive Technology Foundation, to learn about support for purchasing an adaptive van.

The Utah Center for Assistive Technology collaborated with AgrAbility and the Goble family to develop a foam wedge for Kate to sleep on at night.

This wedge keeps her at an angle and prevents aspiration, and future hospitalizations.

Kelly Warner, a physical therapist with the "Up to Three" program, consulted with AgrAbility to write a small grant funded by the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints for a therapeutic swing.

The motion of this swinging for children with disorders like Kate's, provides comfort, and makes them feel more balanced. This therapeutic intervention will eventually allow Kate to have more purposeful movement by improving the mind/body connection and providing feedback on the location of the body to the brain.

Collectively, and with the work and support of multiple programs, Kate

has the care that she needs, and the family has greater independence to do the work they love.

Matt and Aimee hope their story can help other parents of children with Aicardi syndrome or other disabilities. Not only from connections with programs and agencies which can provide support, but also through the empowering and inspiring support parents and families can offer one another.

*-Jennifer Hobby
AgrAbility of Utah
Program Coordinator*

For more information about Aicardi Syndrome, parenting a child with disabilities, the sheep industry, and rural living check out Matt and Aimee's blog: sheeparegood.blogspot.com, or contact them via email at: goble_matt@yahoo.com.

Below: Matt and Kate going for a ride.



New Partnership Brings Comprehensive Support to the Home and Heart of Rural Utah

In April of 2010 New Frontiers for Families (NFF) developed a formal partnership with AgrAbility of Utah.

NFF is a Utah non-profit organization that began with a mission to help people remain in their communities and succeed.

NFF provides wraparound case

management to consumers and their families with complex needs, promoting self sufficiency and improving

their quality of life. Through these services, NFF brings providers, educators, businesses, community leaders, and neighbors together to

create the services and supports that people need. We are excited to partner with AgrAbility; our missions work well together. We want to help people remain in their communities and continue in the work and activities they enjoy.

We look forward to working with AgrAbility and supporting the idea of working with the 'culture of the family.'

*-Tracy Johnson
Director of NFF*

For information on the programs and supports offered go to our website: newfrontiersforfamilies.org or call: (435)676-2599



Above: NFF Staff and Board

Looking for more information about AgrAbility?

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