



THE BALING WIRE

Summer 2006 Edition

Promoting Independence in
Agriculture



Look for our winter workshops hosted at cities near you!

This year the workshops will include information about AgrAbility & managing back injury

The workshops will also highlight equipment designed to make your farm and ranch work easier and more efficient.

Please call Dr. Bob Fetsch at 970-491-5648 for more information!

Farming After a Severe Back Injury

Gary Frihauf, along with his wife Barbara, lease and operate 420 acres near Byers. They grow wheat, barley, sugar beets, and corn. In addition to farming, as is becoming the trend in farming, Mr. Frihauf has another job. He is a distributor of bulk oil and seed in his area. He receives, stores and delivers seed and oil in drums and by the case.

In August of 2004, Mr. Frihauf had an accident that changed the way he farmed. While checking the grain in one of his bins, the ladder gave way, he fell twenty feet to the ground, and fractured several of his vertebrae in his lower back. As a result of the injury, he has decreased movement in his back and increased pain and discomfort, especially after working.

After the accident, working on the farm and transporting the oil and seed to customers became very difficult. A family member had heard that the Colorado AgrAbility Project was a resource for farmers and ranchers to get information about how to farm more efficiently after a serious injury or disability. They suggested that Gary contact our program.

After AgrAbility visited the Frihauf farm, it was decided that there were several things that could be done to help Frihauf complete his farm work safer and easier.



Mr. Frihauf using the Vers-A-Lift to lift and move the oil drum in his shop.

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AgrAbility Baling Wire



AgrAbility met with Frihauf and discussed which tasks were becoming the most difficult. After looking at every aspect of his farming operation, AgrAbility focused on these key areas and began researching different ways for him to complete these tasks.

Mr. Frihauf used two tractors for his farm work. Due to his injury, he was unable to twist to see the implements behind the tractor. The answer was to add a swivel base to the seats. Enabling him to turn the whole seat instead of his back to watch behind the tractor.



Swivel seat installed on Gary's tractor allowing him to more easily see his implements behind him..

Frihauf also uses grain augers to fill his grain bins. The winch to raise the augers was old and rusty making it very difficult to use. AgrAbility added electric winches to the augers to raise and lower the augers with the touch of a button, reducing the effort drastically. With his back injury, climbing the stairs to the grain bin was unsafe as well. Bin indicators were added to the bins, he can now monitor the level of grain in each bin from the ground. Several additional sections of gated pipe were also purchased so Frihauf would not have to move pipe to irrigate the crops.



Mr. Frihauf using electric winch to raise and lower his auger.

Frihauf also noted that moving, storing and loading his seed sacks and oil drums was becoming more difficult. A Vers-A-Lift was purchased to help with moving the oil drums and bags of seed. A four wheeled dolly was purchased to move the drums around the storage area. A truck crane was also installed on Frihauf's pick-up so he could load and unload the barrels from his truck independently.

AgrAbility worked with other organizations like Friends of Man and the Colorado Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) to help reduce the financial burden of purchasing all of the assistive equipment. (More information about DVR is included on page 3.)

In an interview with Becky Talley, a graduate student from CSU, Gary shared about his experience working with AgrAbility. For Gary, who didn't know about the organization before he was urged to call by his family, it was amazing to find out how much help AgrAbility could



provide. "I had no idea what they would supply and what they could do. I am really surprised at what they can do," he said. The adaptations that were made to his equipment has made it much easier and quicker to continue his farming. "It will help a lot. Last year everything was done in slow motion. I got it done but not quite as soon." Because of this, Gary is able to continue independently working in the trade that he has devoted much of his life to, and he recommends AgrAbility to others who may be in the same situation. "You're kind of lost without it. It was a blessing."

If you or someone you know has difficulty farming or ranching due to a back injury or any other injury or disability, please call AgrAbility Project Coordinator, Jason Beck, at 1-877-279-1638 x224 for more information.

More on the Colorado Division of Vocational Rehabilitation

Colorado Division of Vocational Rehabilitation can offer services to farmers and ranchers with disabilities that assist them in finding ways to regain or maintain their employment in agriculture. A vocational rehabilitation counselor can then determine whether an individual is eligible for services.

Once eligibility has been determined the counselor and client can work together to determine the types of services that are most suitable for the client. This process usually results in a written rehabilitation plan that identifies the client's vocational goal and DVR services needed to attain the goal.

DVR services include:

- Vocational testing and assessment
- Vocational guidance and counseling
- Training or education funding
- And more...



Visit the Colorado Division of Vocational Rehabilitation web site at www.cdhs.state.co.us/ods/dvr/ or call them for the location of the nearest office; 303-866-4150 or Toll free 866-870-4595.

COLORADO AGRABILITY PROJECT

Creating solutions, changing lives.

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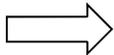


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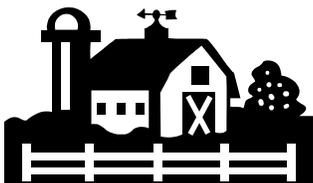
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www.hdfs.cahs.colostate.edu/AgrAbility//agrability.htm



The Colorado AgrAbility Project has been awarded a new four-year grant from the USDA to continue its work helping Colorado's farm and ranch families remain independent and successful. The AgrAbility grant process was especially competitive and we are very proud to have been selected as a recipient. We would like to thank the Colorado farm and ranch families who have worked with us over the last four years and who have been supportive of the Colorado AgrAbility Project. For those of you who have not worked with us before we encourage you to call Jason Beck, Project Coordinator, at 1-877-279-1638 x224 to see how AgrAbility may be able to work with you. We look forward to continue our work for the next four years!



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