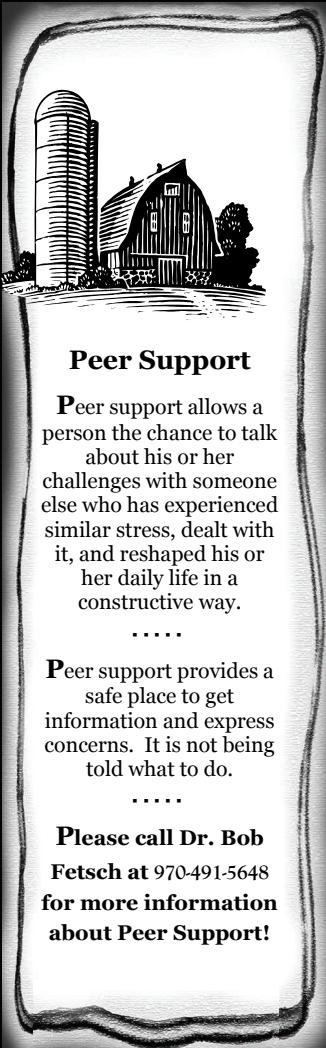




# THE BALING WIRE

Summer 2007 Edition

Promoting Independence in  
Agriculture



## Peer Support

Peer support allows a person the chance to talk about his or her challenges with someone else who has experienced similar stress, dealt with it, and reshaped his or her daily life in a constructive way.

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Peer support provides a safe place to get information and express concerns. It is not being told what to do.

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

## Getting Back to Ranching

Farmers and ranchers work in one of the noblest professions there is. They produce food for their communities and, today, the world. They preserve open space and, thus, resist urban sprawl and they keep a valuable American tradition alive. People in agriculture are strong and self sufficient, and have to be looking at the roller coaster rides they take because of the markets, but like their urban cousins they still have health problems, which can sometimes make it hard to work. While it can be hard for farmers and ranchers to ask for help, there is help out there in the form of a partnership that specializes in helping Colorado's agriculturists stay in the lifestyle that they love. It's called AgrAbility.



AgrAbility client Tim Hunt and AgrAbility staff Jason Beck add easier to use steps to Tim's tractor.

The Hunt family of Woodrow, is one of the several ranching and farming families in Colorado that have faced a health challenge. Tim and Vicky Hunt run 350 head of heifers and have some acres of farm ground that they work. Things for the Hunt family changed on Easter of 2006 when Tim suffered a serious stroke, which impaired the use of his right side. Like other people from all walks of life who face a health issue, the Hunts had to face a transition and had to question the future of their ranch.

When he was able, Tim started rehabilitation, but as many people have found, medical bills can quickly get overwhelming. A therapist recommended the Hunts call Colorado AgrAbility, a unique group that helps to promote independence in agriculture by helping farmers, ranchers and their family members who are facing challenges due to disability.

(Continued on page 2)

## AgrAbility Baling Wire



The Hunts contacted AgrAbility initially to help find funding to allow Tim to stay in rehabilitation, which the organization was able to help with, as well as much more. "It's nice to know that there are places and people out there that can help," said Vicky. Representatives from Colorado AgrAbility came to the Hunt's farm to visit with Vicky and Tim to find out how they could help him continue ranching. "The goal was to get him back to work. Often, that's the whole income, and to have it in question, it's terrifying to hear about. I can't imagine experiencing it," says Marsha Hunt (no relation), a rural rehabilitation specialist with Colorado AgrAbility who was working with the Hunts. Hunt added that a representative from the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) also sat in on the home visit and was very instrumental in providing funding for many of the improvements.

According to Vicky, Tim was determined to walk and gain back function that he had lost, and through hard work and rehabilitation he was successful. AgrAbility was further able to help Tim gain progress. "When we talked with them, we would tell them what he had difficulties with and they would come up with suggestions to help Tim," said Vicky. Some of those suggestions included a step kit for Tim's tractor, as previously he had to have someone help him onto the equipment. AgrAbility also recommended installing cattle guards so Tim wouldn't have to get in and out of vehicles to close gates.

According to Vicky, she and Tim had worked to adapt a four-wheeler for Tim's use, but they felt that it was unstable. So, AgrAbility is working with DVR to get them a UTV (utility vehicle), which Vicky said will allow Tim to be able to do chores around the farm without having to use a pickup. According to Vicky these modifications have given Tim more independence to continue in the occupation he loves. "He needs that time," she said, adding what AgrAbility has helped provide has also given her more piece of mind. "When we first got him home from the hospital, I didn't leave his side. Now, after a year, I am able to relax a little bit more when he goes out," she said. "The safety of what we have been given, that is important, and the encouragement that Colorado AgrAbility gave him--they have been wonderful."

Marsha Hunt strongly encourages other farm and ranch families to contact AgrAbility about any challenge--whether it be a hearing loss, back injuries, cancer, multiple sclerosis or brain/spinal cord injuries, to name just a few of the disabilities AgrAbility can assist



*Tim trying out his new steps as his wife Vicki and Jason look on.*



*Tim's easier to use new steps (left) compared to his narrow old steps (right).*

# AgrAbility Baling Wire

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with. "This is our niche, assistive technology and equipment modifications for ag products. I really respect and admire farmers and ranchers. It's a very noble profession and we want to help them."

# # #

This year the Colorado AgrAbility Project will offer 20 free workshops in 10 communities throughout the state. On most days there will be a workshop in the morning and a workshop in the afternoon. The morning workshop for farm and ranch families is titled "Got Knee/Hip/Joint Problems on the Ranch/Farm?" They will run from 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. with a free lunch served from 12-1p.m. for those who pre-register a week ahead of time. If you are planning on attending a workshop please call Bob Fetsch (970) 491-5648 or email [fetsch@cahs.colostate.edu](mailto:fetsch@cahs.colostate.edu) for more information and to register so that a lunch can be provided for you.

The afternoon workshops are for professionals who work with farm and ranch families with disabilities. The workshop will focus on "AgrAbility & Utilizing Knee, Hip, and Joint Problem Resources with Farmers and Ranchers with Disabilities." Times vary for these workshops , so please call Bob Fetsch at (970) 491-5648 about the workshop you are interested in.

- ⇒ **Durango:** November 13, 2007, Extension Bldg. Florida Room at 2500 N. Main St. with Wendy Rice (970) 247-4355.
- ⇒ **Cortez:** November 15, Empire Electric, Calvin Denton Room at 801 N. Broadway with Tom Hooten (970) 565-3123.
- ⇒ **Monte Vista:** January 29, 2008, San Luis Valley Information Center at 947 1st Ave. with Eleanor West (719) 852-7381.
- ⇒ **Trinidad:** January 30, Trinidad Junior College Sullivan Student Center at 600 Prospect Ave. with Dean Oatman (719) 846-6881.
- ⇒ **Westcliffe:** January 31, Cliff Lanes at 25 Main St. with Karen Crumbaker (719) 783-2514.
- ⇒ **Sterling:** February 5, Logan County Extension Office at 508 South 10th Ave., Suite 1 with Bruce Bosley (970) 522-3200, ext. 285.
- ⇒ **Yuma:** February 7, First Presbyterian Church at 110 W. 4th Ave. with Dennis Kaan (970) 345-2287.
- ⇒ **Aurora:** February 8, Arapahoe County Fairgrounds at 25690 East Quincy Avenue with Dale Edwards (303) 738-7907.
- ⇒ **Meeker:** February 20, Meeker Extension Office at 779 Sulphur Creek Road with Bill Ekstrom (970) 878-9490.
- ⇒ **Walden:** February 21, Soil Conservation District Building at 312 Fifth St. with Debbie Alpe (970) 723-4298.

For more information about attending a workshop please call Bob Fetsch at (970) 491-5648.

## EASTER SEALS – COLORADO AGRABILITY PROJECT



Promoting Independence in Agriculture

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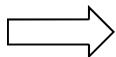


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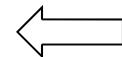
*Putting Knowledge to Work*

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If you wish to be removed from our mailing list,  
please contact Jason Beck at 877-279-1638 x224.



[www.hdfs.cahs.colostate.edu/AgrAbility//agrability.htm](http://www.hdfs.cahs.colostate.edu/AgrAbility//agrability.htm)



## Equipment Corner

We have a few items in our loan closet here at Easter Seals which you may benefit from or someone you know. Please call us at 1-877-279-1638 x224 and ask for Jason if you are interested in any item listed below.

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- Shower Benches
  - Bathtub Rails
  - Child-size Tilt-in-Space Power Wheelchair
  - Canes
  - Bedside Commodes
  - Walkers
  - Power Wheelchair
- 

Colorado AgrAbility is a joint project between Colorado State University Cooperative Extension and Easter Seals Colorado. This material is based upon work supported by the USDA Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service, under special project number 2006-41590-03405. For more information about the AgrAbility project please contact **Jason Beck 1-877-279-1638 x224** or **Marsha Hunt 1-877-279-1638 x233**.