



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

A Way of Life!

AgrAbility Program Helps Ag Workers with Disabilities

Byers, Colorado January 2017- Farming and ranching is not just a job, it's a way of life. However for 58 year old disabled US Navy veteran Alec MacDuff the satisfaction was waning. A fall from an upper deck to a lower deck during operations at sea had left him with a permanent injury. Over time that injury got worse. As we all would, he favored the injured side and used then opposite twice as much. Well that resulted in more injury and a fall on his farm. So today he struggles with back pain and stiffness, and reduced strength and range of motion in his shoulders, wrist, elbow, and hip. Their farm operation encompasses goats for milk, cheese, and meat, sheep for cheese, chickens for eggs, and turkey as a meat bird. What used to be livestock handling has become livestock wrestling due to his reduced flexibility and strength. A chance meeting with Colorado AgrAbility Project Jim Craig, a veteran of the US Marine Corps couldn't have happened at a more opportune time. Alec and his wife Tatiana were considering giving up much of their operation due to the struggle. They attended a Winter Workshop in Aurora after which they reached out to the AgrAbility project. Mr. Craig came to the farm for an assessment of their daily tasks and the limitations. Jim found that Tatiana also had significant limitations with her strength and ranges of motion. They identified that their biggest challenges and risks of secondary injury are with the livestock handling and milking. With a grant generously provided by the Colorado Department of Military and Veterans Affairs, and the Disabled American Veterans, the AgrAbility project is helping them move forward toward acquiring a livestock handling system and a milking machine. If you are facing functional challenges and want to know if CAP can help you, consider attending a Winter Workshop in your area.

About Colorado AgrAbility Project- Colorado State University Extension and Goodwill Industries of Denver work together on the Colorado AgrAbility Project to provide disability workshops, on-site evaluations, resource information, equipment modification and assistive technology. The U.S. Department of Agriculture National Institute of Food and Agriculture provides funding for the Colorado AgrAbility Project.

About Goodwill Industries of Denver -Goodwill Industries of Denver seeks to reverse the cycle of poverty through career preparation and skills training for at-risk youth, struggling families and individuals with disabilities. Through its thrift retail operations and community programs, Goodwill is ensuring that every individual in our community has the opportunity to live to their fullest potential and overcome barriers to success and self-sufficiency. Visit www.goodwilldenver.org to learn more.

Colorado AgrAbility is hosting 8 free workshops across Colorado this winter. The workshop, "AgrAbility, How to Work Well with Agricultural Lenders and Bankers" and "Mental Wellness for Rural America" will take place from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 and includes lunch for those who pre-register.

To pre-register or get more information about the Colorado AgrAbility Project, participants can call or email Candiss Leathers (720-539-4435); cleathers@goodwilldenver.org, or Norm Dalsted (970 222-5657); Norman.Dalsted@ColoState.EDU or the Extension agent listed below for more information.

Remaining workshops:

- Aurora: February 1st, 2017, 25690 E Quincy Ave, Aurora, CO 80016, with Johnathan, Vrabec. (719-661-2286)
- Yuma: February 14th, 2017, Concession Building at the Yuma County Fairgrounds, 410 W. Hoag Ave., Yuma, CO. 853656 , with Dennis Kaan, (970- 345-2287, Mobile: 970-520-1826).
- Sterling: February 15, 2017, County Extension Office, 508 South 10th Ave. Sterling, CO. 80751 with Dennis Kaan (Voice: 970-345-2287, Mobile: 970-520-1826)
- Walden: February 21th, 2016, Jackson County Fairgrounds, Wattenberg Center, 686 CR 42 Walden, with Debbie Alpe (970-723-4298).