

**Breaking New Ground
Outreach Program**

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A newsletter dedicated to friends of the Indiana AgrAbility Project/Breaking New Ground Outreach Program

Innovation Drives Daleville Entrepreneur

Jeff Ginn pursues niche market business in aquaponics

Tucked into the countryside on the outskirts of Daleville, Indiana, is an innovative greenhouse with an innovative proprietor.

About a year ago, Jeff Ginn opened his aquaponics business at this locale to grow fresh produce and raise fish in a symbiotic system. The fruits and vegetables are grown without soil in water-filled tanks, and the water recirculates through the fish tank. The fish waste fertilizes the plants, and the plants clean the water for the fish. Jeff is also hoping to add Australian crayfish to the bottom of the produce tanks, as they can live by eating the plants' dead roots. Sounds about as efficient as a system can get.



Jeff discusses modifications to his operation with AgrAbility's Steve Swain

A former tool and die maker, Jeff was injured in a motorcycle crash in 2004 and uses a wheelchair for mobility. Indiana AgrAbility is working with Indiana Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) to acquire technologies and modifications for improving his employment outcomes. Recommendations include: a tracked, stand-up wheelchair to improve his outdoor mobility and allow him to easily reach higher equipment; additional mats on the gravel floor of the greenhouse for easier wheelchair navigation; and a modified entrance to his

greenhouse for improved safety and ease of access.

Thus far, Jeff has sold most of his produce to a local restaurant, but he is now leaning toward a community supported agriculture (CSA) business model. Customers would "subscribe" to the CSA and receive, at regular intervals, an allotment of produce and/or fish.

With his innovative spirit and help from groups like AgrAbility and VR, Jeff and his business have strong growth potential.

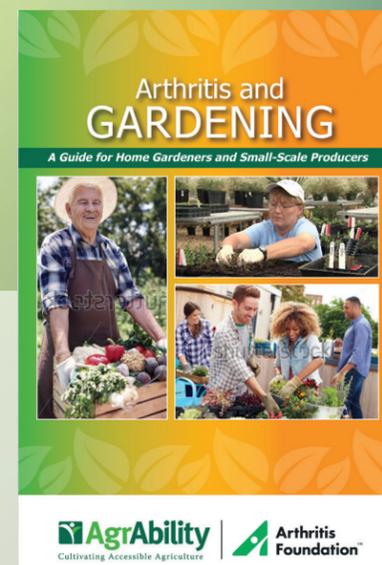


Various types of leafy greens grow in a tank at Jeff Ginn's aquaponics greenhouse

AN AGRABILITY/ARTHRITIS FOUNDATION BOOKLET

New Arthritis and Gardening publication available

DOWNLOAD AT www.agrability.org/resources/arthritis



- + GARDEN PLANNING
- + MANAGING PAIN
- + HELPFUL TOOLS
- + EXERCISES
- + ADDITIONAL SOURCES OF HELP

Gardening is one of America's most popular hobbies, and arthritis is America's leading cause of disability. However, don't assume that one must give up gardening, including small-scale agricultural production enterprises, when arthritis pain strikes.

The National AgrAbility Project and the Arthritis Foundation recently published a new resource: **Arthritis and Gardening: A Guide for Home Gardeners and Small-Scale Producers**. This 20-page booklet covers such topics as pre-planning your garden to accommodate arthritis, helpful tools and accessories, preparing your body for gardening activities, and minimizing arthritis pain while gardening.

Email agrability@agrability.org for a complimentary copy or download it at www.agrability.org/resources/arthritis/.

Out & About with AgrAbility

EDUCATION & AWARENESS PAST & FUTURE



Indiana AgrAbility joined more than 220 professionals, farmers, and ranchers at the 2016 AgrAbility National Training Workshop in Ft. Collins, CO, April 11-14. Featured speakers included renowned animal behaviorist and autism advocate Temple Grandin, shown above receiving an achievement award from project leader Bill Field.

Some upcoming events:

- RESNA Annual Meeting, Arlington, VA, July 10-14, with AgrAbility anniversary celebration July 12
- Veterans' training workshop, Purdue University, July 30
- Indiana State Fair, Indianapolis, August 5-21
- AgrAbility Regional Training Workshop, Frankenmuth, MI, August 8-10
- Veterans' tour of Ponderosa Aqua Farm, Spencer, IN, October 15

AGRABILITY'S ENHANCED OUTREACH TO MILITARY VETERANS HAS RESULTED IN NEW CLIENTS AND A UNIQUE OPPORTUNITY BEFORE CONGRESS

Veterans outreach continues to expand

AgrAbility has made more inroads in serving our nation's veterans in cooperation with groups like Purdue's Beginning Farmer/Rancher Development Program (BFRDP) and the Farmer Veteran Coalition.

As part of the BFRDP grant, AgrAbility recently sponsored a veterans' workshop covering topics like permaculture and rotational grazing, followed by a tour of veteran Zach Morris's Freebird Farm and Homestead in Walton, Indiana.

Indiana farmers who are military veterans or on active duty can now market their products using the Indiana Grown and Homegrown by Heroes initiative. The Indiana State Department of Agriculture, the Farmer Veteran Coalition, and Indi-

ana AgrAbility partnered to make these marketing labels available. The program was launched February 29 with Governor Pence and Indiana farmer veterans participating.

The AgrAbility National Training Workshop featured a variety of veteran-focused activities, including a presentation by Lanon Bacaam, USDA's liaison to farmer veterans. Mr. Bacaam later invited Cindy Chastain to testify about AgrAbility before the House Committee on Agriculture during a hearing on the role of veterans in national food security on May 18. View it at www.tinyurl.com/agrabilityvets.

A veterans' training workshop is scheduled for July 30 at Purdue, and a tour of another veteran-owned operation, Ponderosa Aqua Farm in Spencer, IN, is set for October 15. For more information on these and other veteran-related events, email Cindy Chastain chastai1@purdue.edu.



Governor Pence (fourth from right) with farmer veterans at Homegrown by Heroes launch

Longtime friend of Indiana AgrAbility retires

Tolbert served as director of SICIL



Al Tolbert
(photo Garet Cobb of the Times-Mail)

Al Tolbert, executive director of the Southern Indiana Center for Independent Living (SICIL), retired in December 2015. An outstanding advocate for people with disabilities, Al became the founding director of SICIL in 1995. SICIL was a subcontractor for Indiana AgrAbility Project for several years, and Al was a member of the Indiana AgrAbility Advisory Team for many more. He was also chairman of the Indiana Council on Independent Living, leading the group through some challenging times.

The new SICIL director is Teresa Reynolds, formerly director of SICIL Home Care Services.



Teresa Reynolds

AgrAbility celebrates 25th anniversary

The USDA AgrAbility Program, which provides funding to Breaking New Ground and 19 other state projects, turns 25 in 2016. We're celebrating the farmers, ranchers, other agricultural workers, and family members that AgrAbility serves and the impact the program has made since 1991.

To honor them and illustrate AgrAbility's impact, the NAP has launched the **25 Years, 25 Stories** campaign that highlights 25 of the people and programs that exemplify AgrAbility's mission. Stories are being shared at www.agrability.org/25years, the Facebook page www.facebook.com/nationalagrability, the Twitter account [@NatAgrAbility](https://twitter.com/NatAgrAbility) (#agrability25), and in a print and electronic publication scheduled for summer.

Consider how you might join the 25th anniversary celebration and promote AgrAbility's mission of cultivating accessible agriculture. Share one of our Facebook posts, retweet a client story, or share your own story by emailing it to agrability@agrability.org.



TOOLBOX Spotlight

TOOLS TO MAKE LIFE EASIER



The folding, portable Deckmate Trailer-Access Ladder is designed to provide safe entry onto and exit from flatbed and van trailers. It's 18 inches wide, 53 inches long (30 inches when folded), less than 20 pounds, and has a 400-pound weight capacity.

The Deckmate hooks on the rub-rail of flatbeds or has a bolt-on bracket for vans; thus it should not slide, tip, or blow over in the wind. Features include storage pocket, removable support bar, anti-skid steps, reflective markers, and a hinge design to prevent pinching of fingers or clothes from getting caught when folding/unfolding.

For more information on this and other helpful technologies, visit **THE TOOLBOX Assistive Technology Database** at www.agrability.org/toolbox