

A workshop for veterans interested in agriculture and for professionals who work with veterans

Veterans and Agriculture:

*Opportunities for Employment,
Entrepreneurship, and Enrichment*

November 7-8, 2012

Beck Agricultural Center, Purdue University

Planning committee: Indiana AgrAbility Project, National AgrAbility Project, The Military Family Research Institute at Purdue University, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, Purdue University Student Veteran Organization, Purdue Department of Agronomy

Financial sponsors: USDA AgrAbility Project, The Military Family Research Institute at Purdue University, Community Foundation of Greater Lafayette, Indiana Rural Safety and Health Council



2012 Veterans and Agriculture Conference Program

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 7

9:00-10:00am **Registration**, Atrium

10:00-10:20am **Welcome, Introductions, and Instructions**, Room 143

10:30-11:10am **Morning Session A**

Marketing Alternatives for Small Farms, Room 117

Presenter: Steve Engleking

Small farms are more likely to have specialty enterprises rather than commodity-based enterprises. This means that alternative marketing options will need to be utilized to sell items produced on these farms. The session will explore a variety of direct and wholesale marketing techniques.

Selecting a Livestock Enterprise for a Small Farm, Room 111B

Presenter: Mark Kepler

Before going into livestock production take a good look at the physical assets on the farm and see how they relate to that enterprise.

Military 101/Reintegration, Room 111A

Presenter: Sandra Dye

This session will be provided by the Military Family Research Institute (MFRI) at Purdue University, a research and outreach organization that works closely with partners and collaborators to improve the lives of service members and their families. The session will give an overview of important issues being experienced by returning veterans from the recent conflicts. It will assist participants in understanding the challenges this group of mostly young Americans are facing, strategies available to deal with disabilities and employment issues, and especially the role that the agricultural sector can play in reintegrating them into civilian life. Specific topics include:

- The mission and work of Purdue's Military Family Research Institute
- Veterans of the recent conflicts – distinguishing factors and issues
- Veterans' reintegration issues and strategies:
 - Dealing with disability – visible and invisible
 - Employment
 - Veterans with injuries and disabilities in Agriculture – models and programs

11:20-12:00pm

Morning Session B

***Cooperative Extension: Making a Difference Today and Tomorrow*, Room 117**

Presenter: Dan Wilson

The Cooperative Extension Service was created as a source of relevant information initially for production agriculture and has evolved into a one-stop source of information for agriculture, youth programs, health and human services, and economic development. There are many resources available that may not be known by the general public. This session will explain the system and the resources available.

***SARE Grants*, Room 111B**

Presenter: Roy Ballard

This session will offer participants an overview of the funding possibilities available from the North Central Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (NC-SARE) program. Specific attention will be given to the 2012-13 Farmer Rancher Grant call for proposals as well as the Youth Educator grants. These funds can be used by successful applicants to advance their investigation of how new tools and/or techniques/management practices can contribute to enhancing their level of farm sustainability.

Sustainability, loosely defined, refers to the process of increasing a farm's profitability while treating workers and neighbors in a fair and appropriate manner and reducing their impact of the farming activity on the environment. The three "legs" of the sustainability "stool" are practices that reflect a commitment to economic, environmental and social sustainability. SARE grant funds are made available to foster investigation, and hopefully adoption, of such practices.

***The Healing Power of Nature-Horticulture Therapy at the Salem Veterans Affairs Medical Center*, Room 111A**

Presenter: Sandy Lane

What started as a vocational horticulture training program became a multi-faceted therapeutic horticulture program that benefits not only patients, but the hospital staff and the entire community. We will discuss the activities, benefits, and logistics of the program and the role of community engagement in the process.

12:00-12:45pm

Lunch, Room 143

12:45-1:35pm

Panel Discussion, Room 143

1:45-2:25pm

Afternoon Session A

***What to Expect when Working with Vocational Rehabilitation (VR)*, Room 117**

Presenter: Steve Etheridge

Collaborations between AgrAbility and state Vocational Rehabilitation systems are some of the most critical relationships in serving agricultural workers with disabilities. Without VR, many AgrAbility clients would not receive essential services and assistive technology, and without AgrAbility, VR would lose an essential link in reaching rural residents with disabilities.

Vocational Rehabilitation also has a long history of collaboration with the VA-VR. This session will provide a brief overview of the VR process and procedure with a goal of increasing understanding and lessening uncertainty when working with yet another bureaucracy.

***The Work of the Farmer Veteran Coalition*, Room 111B**

Presenter: Michael O’Gorman

Michael O’Gorman, executive director of the Farmer Veteran Coalition, will share the organization’s guiding principles and an overview of their projects and what we can offer veteran farmers and aspiring farmers. He will also address how FVC can help disabled veterans to farm and the organization’s special relationship with AgrAbility. Michael will discuss the expanding of FVC’s work in 2013.

***Horticulture Therapy Roundtable*, Room 111A**

Facilitator: Sandy Lane

During this session, horticulturalist Sandy Lane will meet informally with those interested in starting a horticulture therapy program to help them understand essential aspects of such initiatives. Both professionals and consumers are welcome to participate.

2:35-3:15 pm

Afternoon Session B

***Resources and Services through the Small Business Administration*, Room 117**

Presenter: Peter Smith

Informative session on the different types of guaranteed loan programs available through the U.S. Small Business Administration; to include the 7 (a) & 504 loan programs, and also information on the Patriot Express loan program, specifically designed for members of the military community.

***Organic Produce Roundtable*, Room 111B**

Facilitator: Michael O’Gorman

Join Michael O’Gorman, executive director for the Farmer Veteran Coalition, for an informal discussion of the organic produce industry. Michael has been a pioneering organic farmer for over forty years. During the last twenty years he has been the production manager for some of the nation’s largest organic vegetable companies, including TKO Farms, Mission Organics (Natural Selection Foods) and, most recently, Jacobs Farm/Del Cabo.

***Traumatic Brain Injury*, Room 111A**

Presenter: Robbie Schmidt

Traumatic brain injury (TBI) is one of the “signature injuries” of the current Mideast conflicts. This session will focus on what a brain injury is and strategies to coping with the symptoms of a mild injury.

3:15-3:45pm

Break

3:45-4:25pm

Afternoon Session C

Ag Credit Programs Available from the Farm Service Agency, Room 117

Presenter: Greg Foulke

This session will provide details about the many direct and guaranteed agricultural lending opportunities available to farmers through the Farm Service Agency (FSA). It will focus on both beginning and non-beginning farmer loan programs and will provide a brief overview of eligibility requirements, authorized loan uses, rates, and terms.

Assistive Technology for Agriculture, Room 111B

Presenters: Bill Field and Paul Jones

Various types of tools can help agricultural workers overcome the limiting effects of many kinds of impairments, including arthritis, back problems, amputations, spinal cord injuries, hearing impairments, and cognitive difficulties. Members of the National AgrAbility Project team will discuss such devices with special focus on The Toolbox Assistive Technology Database Online. In addition, Mobility SVM will give a hands-on demonstration of their wheelchair-accessible pickup trucks.

Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder in Veterans, Room 111A

Presenter: Roberta Schweitzer

In recent years PTSD has been recognized much more frequently in veterans. This presentation will describe what PTSD is and differentiate it from a normal reaction to trauma. PTSD signs and symptoms will be described, as well as causes and risk factors. Treatment resources available to veterans for getting help will also be discussed.

4:35-5:15pm

Afternoon Session D

Benefits through the Veterans Administration, Room 117

Presenters: Deborah Walls and Jami Stout

The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, commonly known as the VA, is the main portal for benefits to veterans, their families, and survivors. As the second-largest department in the U.S. government, the VA is charged with addressing a wide range of services to veterans, including education, medical treatment, and vocational rehabilitation. This session will describe what is available through the VA, and how to access services. Join VA staff from Indianapolis as they share about ways to assist the rural veteran population.

Business Planning Basics, Room 111B

Presenter: Steve Swain

The cornerstone of the American economy is small business. One of the growing trends for people with disabilities is to start their own business. Self-employment provides the flexibility that is sometimes needed by a person with a disability to earn an income and remain employed. When exploring self-employment a business plan is very highly recommended and sometimes required by a lending institution or Vocational Rehabilitation Services. This workshop will present the basics of a business plan, provide some resources for

information required in a business plan, give templates to start writing a business plan, and show an example of a VR authorized and funded business plan.

Entrepreneurship Bootcamp for Veterans with Disabilities, Room 111A

The 'Entrepreneurship Bootcamp for Veterans with Disabilities' (EBV) offers cutting edge, experiential training in entrepreneurship and small business management to post-9/11 soldiers, sailors, aviators, and marines with disabilities resulting from their service to our country. The EBV is designed to open the door to entrepreneurial opportunity and small business ownership by 1) developing your competence in the many steps and activities associated with creating and sustaining an entrepreneurial venture, and 2) helping you coordinate your efforts with programs and services for veterans and others with disabilities.

5:15pm **Dinner on your own**

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 8

8:00-8:45am **Breakfast** – Room 111

8:45-9:45 am **Life Essentials Demonstration: Assistive Technology in Agriculture** – Outside

10:00-10:50am **Tour Purdue Aquaculture Facility**

11:00-11:50am **Tour Purdue Sheep Facility**

12:00-12:30pm **Lunch**

1:15-2:45pm **Tour of This Old Farm Meat Processing Facility**

3:00-4:15pm **Tour of Pleasant Acre Farm**

5:00pm **Arrive at Beck Center**