

Midwest Rural Agricultural Safety and Health (MRASH) Conference November 9-10, 2021

by Gayle Olson, MS, CHES, I-CASH Assistant to the Director

Mark your calendars for November 9-10, when the 2021 Midwest Rural Agricultural Safety and Health (MRASH) Conference is planning for the best of both worlds! Our 2021 Conference will be held at the Hotel at Kirkwood in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, but will also have livestreamed sessions, enabling people to attend in person or from a distance. The theme for this year's conference is "Spotlighting Safety and Health for Agriculture's Essential Workers: Raising the Cloak of Invisibility." Our keynote session and several panels will highlight the health and safety needs of some of agriculture's more vulnerable populations that don't always get the attention they deserve, and will consider effective ways to reach out to these groups.



Midwest Rural Agricultural Safety and Health Conference

November 9-10 Hotel at Kirkwood Cedar Rapids, IA

Spotlighting Safety and Health for Agriculture's Essential Workers: Raising the Cloak of Invisibility

Since we will be on the campus of Kirkwood Community College, consistently one of the top community college ag programs in the nation, we will explore some of the ways agricultural safety and health is integrated into their curriculum. We will be livestreaming selected sessions via Zoom to those who wish to register for a virtual conference experience.

[Abstracts](#) are being accepted now; presentation and roundtable abstracts are due July 15 and poster abstracts are due October 10. We will accept abstract submissions from people who can only attend virtually. This year we are asking our poster presenters to be creative with their posters. A typical research poster is filled with charts, data

and words. We encourage people to think about how they can pull out the most important points from their project and put it in a format that is more visually appealing and engaging. Research shows this change results in viewers spending more time reading posters and in conversation with the presenters. **Search for #betterposter for examples, possible layouts and more information on the process.**

IN THIS ISSUE

- Midwest Rural Agricultural Safety and Health (MRASH) Conference
- Directors Message
- I-CASH Seasonal Campaigns
- I-CASH Awards 13 Youth Grants
- AgriSafe Nurse Scholar Program
- News and Updates

The conference needs you in order to be a success! A conference with both online and face-to-face strategies means that anyone in the world interested in agricultural health and safety research or outreach projects can be involved. Be a sponsor, bring an exhibit, or submit an abstract for a poster, roundtable or presentation. Be sure to put the conference dates on your calendar and pass the word to your colleagues. This year, breakout sessions will be presented on Wednesday morning, November 10. Further details about the conference and the forms to submit abstracts are on our [conference website](#).

Director's Message

by Brandi Janssen, PhD

After quite a dry spell in eastern Iowa, we are now settling in for a week of rain. I'm seeing more equipment on our rural roads and watching the recently terminated cover crops die back as planting season gets underway. In that way, spring feels pretty normal, despite the continued pandemic. But, given the wide availability of highly effective vaccines, I am looking forward to things looking even more normal as the season progresses.



Brandi Janssen, PhD

Most importantly, I feel very grateful that my family, which includes my husband, two young adult daughters, and my 82-year-old mother, were all able to get vaccinated already this year. None of us suffered significant reactions to the shots, mostly just sore arms. One daughter thought maybe she had a fever; the rest of us just felt a little bit "off" the day after our second shots. My husband and I got Moderna, the rest of our crew received Pfizer. Read about others' experiences with the vaccine in Stephanie Leonard's most recent [Safety Watch](#) article in Iowa Farmer Today.

As Leonard points out, the vaccines are safe and highly effective—more effective than the annual flu vaccine. These types of vaccines have been carefully researched for decades, but we've just now had a reason to put the technology to use. So, even though it seems like the vaccines were developed quickly, they've actually been waiting in the wings to be ready for our current predicament. Vaccines are now widely available at Hy-Vee and Walgreens, as well as health care settings. To find a location, you can call 211 or go to the [Iowa Department of Public Health's COVID-19 website](#).

As you can read about in this issue, I-CASH staff have been getting back to our usual activities, even while working from home. Our spring and summer Seasonal Campaigns are described on page 3. We were pleased to award grants to 13 youth groups across the state to conduct a farm safety-related project this year. We are also working on the program for our annual MRASH conference. In addition, we are partnering with ISU Extension and Outreach to develop an agricultural curriculum for rural mental health providers and working with the National ROPS Rebate Program to expand our current rebate offerings. I look forward to sharing more information about those last two projects as they progress.

The pandemic has been devastating to many communities, but the vaccine is giving us a light at the end of the tunnel. If you haven't already, I hope you'll get vaccinated soon to help us all get back to normal. It's safe, easy, and more accessible than ever.

Dr. Brandi Janssen directs I-CASH, housed in the Department of Occupational and Environmental Health of the College of Public Health. She can be reached at 319/335-4190 (brandi-janssen@uiowa.edu).

Find us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/IaCenterAgSafetyHealth



The University of Iowa ■ Iowa State University
Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship
Iowa Department of Public Health ■ Non-profits for Farm Health

www.i-cash.org

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And Now Back to our Regularly Scheduled Programming: Seasonal Campaigns

by Brandi Janssen, PhD

As the pandemic affected most of our daily lives in 2020, we made some adjustments to our Seasonal Campaign program. Usually, we send materials and safety products directly to our partners at Iowa State University Extension and Outreach (ISUEO) and Farm Service Agency (FSA) offices for visitors to take. However, since most offices were working at least on reduced schedules, and because we did not want to encourage people to gather in person, we made some adjustments. Summer 2020 focused on safety and health apps that could be used on the farm and in the Fall, we conducted two online respirator fit test trainings for 33 county public health and extension staff. In the winter, we distributed our 2021 calendar.

By this spring, we felt ready to get back to our usual routine. In March, we focused on tick prevention. Each year, about 150 Iowans are infected with Lyme Disease following a tick bite. Prevention strategies include wearing long sleeves and pants, using insect repellent that contains DEET, or treating your clothes and shoes with products that contain .5% permethrin to reduce the risk of a bite. In addition, be vigilant about checking for ticks on you and your pets when you come in from the outdoors. You can download the [IDPH Brochure](#) and read the [April Safety Watch article](#) for more details on preventing tick-borne diseases. We relied on our partners at the

Iowa Department of Public Health Center for Acute Disease Epidemiology and distributed their excellent brochure on tick-borne disease prevention. We also shared a radio PSA across the region, reaching almost 250,000 listeners.



This summer, we are collaborating with the State Office of Rural Health at the Iowa Department of Public Health on a campaign promoting bystander safety around agricultural equipment. Agricultural vehicles, including tractors, combines, sprayers, skid steers, or trucks, commonly have poor sight lines and areas with reduced visibility, known as blind spots. Blind spots are often located directly behind or in front of the vehicle and in front of the rear wheels. Bystanders who are assisting with hitching implements are particularly at risk of being struck by the vehicle. Both operators and bystanders should ensure they can see one another and make regular eye contact, use agreed upon hand signals to communicate, and avoid using a phone or anything else that is distracting. This summer, pick up a safety checklist card at your ISUEO or FSA office, and visit the [I-CASH website](#) for more prevention resources.

For more information on any of the I-CASH Seasonal Campaigns visit www.I-CASH.org

I-CASH Awards Thirteen Agricultural Youth Grants

by Kelsey Strandberg, I-CASH Program Assistant

Each year I-CASH provides funds for small grants to Iowa youth groups who help educate their community members and improve safety on farms in their area. This year thirteen projects were funded.

Allamakee County Extension

The Allamakee County Extension 4-H and FFA will be hosting a day camp covering topics such as PTO, grain bin, first aid, electrical, and animal safety. For the PTO safety demonstration, youth will watch a straw 'person' come into contact with a PTO. These realistic lessons reinforce the safety concepts being taught.

The Legacy of Christopher Allsup Foundation, Inc.

The Legacy of Christopher Allsup Foundation, Inc. will collaborate with 4-H and FFA chapters to introduce and discuss safety portable gasoline containers that have flame arrestors. The group will have a booth at the Guthrie County Fair where they will discuss the Portable Fuel Container Safety Act, and what it means for the youth.

Carroll Champs 4-H

The Carroll Champs 4-H chapter plans on keeping their 4-H members and fair attendees safe during the county fair cattle show by raising awareness of the dangers involved when approaching show cattle. The youth will demonstrate safe practices, implement changes, and present this information to all ages. The highlight of the project will be kids reaching out to other 4-H members and all other fair attendees through posters and video presentations.

Cherokee County Farm Bureau

The Cherokee County Farm Bureau hopes to inform farmers about ways to keep them safe and protected while working in the sun, such as handing out lip balm and sunscreen. Additionally, this group will explain how noise-induced hearing loss is avoidable and hand out earplugs. This program will run during the harvest season by providing the co-ops with the handout materials.

Clark County Extension

The Clark County 4-H clubs will be distributing safety resources and products to farmers throughout the county during harvest season. The 4-H clubs will help distribute the resources while also learning about the importance of farm safety and supporting farmers in the community.

Delaware County Fair

The Delaware County Fair and the Maquoketa Valley FFA chapter will teach youth about the dangers of male animals (i.e., bulls) when they are kept on the farm and used for breeding purposes. Educational signage will be displayed at the fair and a local veterinarian will present an ultrasound demonstration.

Des Moines County Extension

The Des Moines County Extension is planning an educational initiative titled "Stay Safe, Take a Break" that utilizes research-based educational materials to support the health and well-being of their agricultural producers. The 4-H Teen Council will make deliveries to farmers in the field during harvest and deliver a 5-gallon bucket with first aid kits, dust masks, educational brochures, food, and more. This encounter gives the farmer time to stop, stretch, visit with the youth, have a snack, and regroup before climbing back into their combine or tractor.

Ida County Farm Bureau

The Ida County Farm Bureau will be hosting an Agriculture Safety Day alongside two FFA chapters. This event will include stations where youth will learn about safe behaviors around machinery, animals, grain bins, electricity, chemicals, poison, weeds, and about dialing 911. Approximately 90 fourth-graders will participate in this event in September.



continued on page 5

AgriSafe Nurse Scholar 2021

by Charlotte Halverson, BSN COHN-S, Clinical Director, AgriSafe Network

The AgriSafe Nurse Scholar program is an ANCC approved 20 hour continuing education program designed for nurses in rural communities. We know that farmers and ranchers are part of medically underserved populations with health disparities that correlate with occupational exposures. The demands of rigorous nursing education programs leave little room for education geared toward special populations.

This online webinar series can be accessed on-demand to fit the varied schedules of nurses working and teaching in rural areas. In our agricultural communities, nurses are frontline healthcare providers, assessing and caring for agricultural workers and their families.

Webinar sessions are presented by experienced educators and practitioners invested in agricultural health and safety. Several members of the Nurse Scholar guest faculty represent our I-CASH partner institutions and organizations. Participants in the Nurse Scholar program are strongly encouraged to take a deeper investment into ag safety and health through the [Ag Safety & Health Core Course](#). The demands of rigorous nursing education programs leave little room for education geared toward special populations.

Agriculture related corporations and membership organizations recognize the need for well-trained healthcare professionals and provide support for Nurse Scholars in several regions. A limited number of scholarship slots are also available for qualified applicants. Registration for the 2021 Nurse Scholar program is open through February of 2022 and must be completed by March 1, 2022. Continuing education credits are available immediately upon satisfactory completion.

For more information on the AgriSafe Nurse Scholar program, visit learning.agrisafe.org/nurse-scholar-program.

Agricultural Youth Grants continued from page 4

O'Brien County Extension

O'Brien County youth will be constructing a grain tug-of-war unit to be used during their county fair. They hope to raise awareness for grain safety to youth and adults with a hands-on demonstration. The FFA and 4-H youth will present to second-graders during their field trip, as well as to fair youth.

Tama County 4-H and Extension

Tama County 4-H and Extension will be hosting a "Day Care Day at the Fair" where daycares in the county are invited for educational and interactive sessions during the Tama County Fair. The children will receive a tour of the animal barns and will learn about safety around animals. They will also learn about tractor, PTO, and ATV safety.

Washington County Extension

The Washington County 4-H County Council is preparing the "Stay Safe, Take a Break" outreach project that focuses on farmers/farm families during the harvest season. County 4-H members will drop off bags with PPE and snacks for the farmers, giving them a few minutes to stop, stretch, have a snack, and talk with the young people.

Wright County Extension

The Wright County Extension Office, with 4-H clubs and FFA chapters, will have an interactive display at the county fair to educate farm families and community members on farm equipment safety. In addition, 4-H members will distribute slow-moving vehicle signs to farmers.

Wright County Farm Bureau

The Wright County Farm Bureau will host a day camp for third graders focusing on common safety measures that each student can take to prevent a potentially harmful situation. The program will be presented in a fun, interactive way so that the students will remember what they have learned and share it with others. Sessions include practicing dialing 911, first aid kits, PTO safety, and chemical safety. Additionally, the Eagle Grove FFA students will plan and present a session on animal safety.

NEWS AND UPDATES

Agricultural Safety and Health Core Course to be held June 14-18

The course has been the national model of effective agricultural safety and health education for over a decade, providing information and skills needed to enable safety and health professionals to anticipate, recognize, and prevent occupational illnesses and injuries among members of the agricultural community. Expert instruction is provided by experienced faculty and specialists including board certified physicians, nurses, veterinarians, and certified industrial hygienists. Visit the [course website](#) for details.

Registration deadline is June 7, 2021



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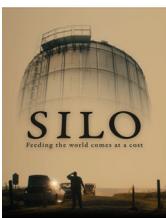
September 19-25, 2021 is **National Farm Safety and Health Week**. The theme this year is "Farm Safety Yields Real Results." Daily topics of focus include: Tractor Safety & Rural Roadway Safety; Overall Farmer Health; Safety & Health for Youth in Agriculture; Agricultural Fertilizer & Chemical Safety; and Safety & Health for Women in Agriculture. Visit the [website](#) for details.

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The Midwest Rural Agricultural Safety and Health Conference (MRASH) is accepting roundtable and presentation abstracts through July 15, 2021. Poster abstracts will be accepted through October 10, 2021. Abstracts focusing on emerging issues and evidence-based practices are highly encouraged. Visit the MRASH [conference website](#) for details.



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"SILO" was the first feature length film about a grain entrapment incident. Initially only available at special screenings, it was released more widely on May 7, showing online and in theaters throughout North America. If you are interested in the location of an upcoming screening, purchasing a DVD, or video on demand, visit the website silothefilm.com.

Upcoming Events

June 14-18

Agricultural Safety and Health: The Core Course
Virtual Event

June 21-24

International Society for Agricultural Safety and Health (ISASH) Conference
Virtual Event

July 12-16

ASABE Annual International Meeting
Virtual and On-Demand Event

July 13-16

Agricultural Health and Safety Course for Medical and Safety Professionals
Virtual Event

August 3-5

Minnesota Farmfest
Redwood County, MN

August 5

Iowa Women in Agriculture Conference
Ankeny, IA

August 31 - September 2

Farm Progress Show
Decatur, IL

September 19-25

National Farm Safety and Health Week

October 27-30

National FFA Convention & Expo
Indianapolis, IN

November 9-10

Midwest Rural Agricultural Safety and Health Conference (MRASH)
Hybrid Conference
Cedar Rapids, IA



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