

## I-CASH Pilots ROPS Rebate Program

by Brandi Janssen, PhD

During last year's legislative session, the Agriculture and Natural Resources Appropriations Committee included line-item funding for I-CASH's operations. This designated funding source allowed us more flexibility in our budgeting and has proven directly beneficial to Iowa's farmers. In January 2020, I-CASH began working with the National ROPS Rebate Program to provide funding for Iowa farmers on the waiting list to add a Rollover Protective Structure (ROPS) to their tractor. We have assisted with ten retrofits so far, investing nearly \$10,000 directly into this lifesaving strategy.

Tractor roll-overs remain the number one cause of death on farms. Data from the New York Center for Agricultural Medicine and Health shows Iowa leads the nation in tractor overturn deaths, accounting for 12% of rollover deaths nationwide. However, when used correctly with a seat belt, Rollover Protective Structures (ROPS) are 99% effective in preventing injury or death in the case of a roll-over. The protective frame of the ROPS stops the operator from being crushed, and the seat belt keeps the operator from being thrown from the tractor.



A 1968 John Deere 4020 tractor in Scott County, Iowa after ROPS installation.

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## Virtual Progressive Agriculture Safety Days® Planned

Ashlee Then, Operations Program Manager, NECAS

The Progressive Agriculture Safety Day® program is the largest rural safety and health education program for children in North America. The program has been providing education, training and resources to make farm, ranch and rural life safer and healthier for children and their communities for over 25 years. The program aims to teach life-saving lessons on agricultural topics such as power take-offs, tractors and grain safety, as well as other rural topics not specific to farming, like staying safe around bodies of water, recreational equipment and utilities like pipelines and railroads.

Due to the COVID-19 coronavirus pandemic, the National Education Center for Agricultural Safety (NECAS) is planning condensed virtual Progressive Agriculture Safety Days® via Zoom. The events will be offered on June 18th, July 9th and August 5th from 10 am – Noon. A date will be scheduled following each event in which participants can pick up their Ag Safety Day t-shirts and take-home bags. Youth ages 4-12 who live on a farm, work on a farm or visit a farm are encouraged to attend. Registration and payment are required in advance. Space is limited. Contact NECAS at (888) 844-6322 or [safetyday@nicc.edu](mailto:safetyday@nicc.edu) to learn more.

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## Director's Message

by Brandi Janssen, PhD

Last year at this time, we were experiencing record flooding in many areas of our state. This year, we are in various stages of stay-at-home orders, attempting to slow the spread of COVID-19. The I-CASH staff, like most of the University of Iowa's employees, have been working from home since mid-March. Our in-person events have been canceled, but we remain active online connecting farmers and others to resources and promoting the work of our partners. You can read about the specific activities that both I-CASH and the Great Plains Center for Agricultural Health (GPCAH) have taken on in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic on page 3.



Brandi Janssen, PhD

In addition to the activities of the ag centers, I want to highlight some of the other work going on at the University of Iowa in response to the pandemic. GPCAH director, Renee Anthony, has put her environmental engineering and industrial hygiene training to good use advising the University on its campus-wide COVID-19 response team. Occupational and Environmental Health faculty Patrick O'Shaughnessy and Peter Thorne have been working with Dr. Jack Stapleton at the VA Hospital to evaluate 3-D printed N95 masks. Matt Nonnenmann, another faculty member in Occupational and Environmental Health, has been working with health care colleagues to collect air samples targeting coronavirus (SARS CoV-2) at UIHC to better understand how the virus is transmitted and how it can be eliminated. And, several in the College of Public Health and the College of Medicine are working to develop precise statistical models to better understand what we can expect, and how we can respond, moving forward. I'll be writing more about the process involved in developing these models in the June Safety Watch column in Iowa Farmer Today.

While the pivot to deal with the outbreak has been time consuming, we continue to address other emerging and persistent issues in agricultural safety and health. In mid-March, I-CASH hosted a screening of the film SILO, a fictional account of a grain entrapment. Our spring seasonal campaign promoted safety when burning brush, you can read more about that on page 4. We continue to work to address issues related to mental health and stress in farm communities and are working with Iowa State University and other partners to develop new resources for providers and farmers.

Finally, let me congratulate all of our graduating students this year. It was disappointing to miss the usual graduation ceremony and celebrations, but we have many students to be proud of. At I-CASH, we are especially proud of Madison Stewart, who graduated with an MS in Agricultural Safety and Health this spring. Her research project was a qualitative study entitled "Perceptions of Mental Health Care Acceptability: Understanding How Knowledge Gaps Hinder Rural Access." Madison has moved to Seattle and started a job as an EHS Administrator at Skanska Construction.

Please let us know if our ag centers, or any other resources at the UI could be helpful to you.

*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](mailto:brandi-janssen@uiowa.edu)).*



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

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Farm Families Alive & Well  
Published 4/yr Kay Mohling, Ed.  
319/335-4219  
[kay-mohling@uiowa.edu](mailto:kay-mohling@uiowa.edu)

[www.i-cash.org](http://www.i-cash.org)

## I-CASH and GPCAH Provide COVID-19 Resources

by Renée Anthony, PhD, CIH, CSP and Brandi Janssen, PhD

The COVID-19 pandemic has affected all parts of the agricultural supply chain. As an essential industry, it is critical to keep farm-related operations up and running as much as it is safely possible. The ag safety and health centers at UI have been working at both the national and state levels to develop guidance and best practices about how to keep farms and other ag-related businesses safely operating.

The Great Plains Center for Agricultural Health (GPCAH) has been working with national ag safety centers to help the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) generate [guidelines](#) that protect farmworkers and ranchers from contracting and spreading the novel virus. These materials cover physical distancing, cloth masks, sanitizing surfaces and equipment, transportation risk and prevention, shared housing risks and prevention, and other topics specific to agricultural operations. Additional helpful tips and resources to help pinpoint the latest CDC guidelines are available on the GPCAH [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#) pages.

I-CASH has assembled statewide resources that include information about virus transmission, as well as updates to financial programs for farmers, prevention best practices, and opportunities to stay connected through webinars and other online offerings. In addition, I-CASH staff has provided input for farmers market managers during the pandemic. There are links to statewide guidance and signage for markets available on the [I-CASH](#) website.

We are updating our online resources as new information becomes available. If you have any specific questions or want to share your innovative solutions about working safely at a distance, drop us an email at [cph-greatplainscenter@uiowa.edu](mailto:cph-greatplainscenter@uiowa.edu) or [cph-icash@uiowa.edu](mailto:cph-icash@uiowa.edu).

*ROPS Rebate Program continued from page 1*

Tractors manufactured after 1985 are mandated to include a ROPS and seat belt, but there are still many tractors being used that were manufactured prior to that date.

This is where the rebate program comes in. The National ROPS Rebate Program is managed by the Northeast Center for Occupational Health and Safety in Agriculture, located in Cooperstown, NY. The program includes online and phone consultation for farmers looking for ROPS for their tractors. Individual states can participate in the program by designating funding to cover the cost of the rebate, and the New York center manages the consultation and administration. The program provides funding for at least 70% of the total cost of the ROPS, with a \$500 out-of-pocket maximum for the farmer. Minnesota and Wisconsin are currently the only states in the Midwest that provide specific funding for farmers in their states to participate.

When I-CASH started working with the program in January, there were 52 Iowa farmers on the waiting list. They had inquired about participating in the program, but there were no funds designated. Although our funding cannot currently support a full program, we are glad that I-CASH can use our funding to support ROPS rebates on a limited basis and will keep doing so as long as our budget remains stable.

For more information about the rebate program, visit [www.ROPSR4U.org](http://www.ROPSR4U.org) or contact [brandi-janssen@uiowa.edu](mailto:brandi-janssen@uiowa.edu).



An International 1466 tractor in Plymouth County, Iowa before and after ROPS installed.

## Seasonal Message Focuses on Persistent Ag Issue

by Brandi Janssen, PhD

Despite the heavy focus on the COVID-19 outbreak, spring farm work has not stopped. The I-CASH spring seasonal campaign focused on a persistent issue in rural communities, injuries sustained while burning brush or debris during regular seasonal clean-up activities. The concern first came to our attention via the University of Iowa Hospitals & Clinics (UIHC) burn unit in 2015, where they had recently seen multiple burn-related deaths. UIHC reported that one-fifth of the patients in the burn unit had been injured by a fire in an open space, and in some southern Iowa counties, the majority of flame-related emergency room visits were the result of burning trash or brush.

In addition, young men ages 16 to 44 are the most likely to be injured, but older patients were more likely to suffer complications or die from their burns. Nearly 20 percent of all of UIHC's burn patients were over the age of 65. Between fall 2012 and spring 2014, six patients died from brush-related burns at UIHC; five of those were over the age of 75.

In March, I-CASH sent a safe burn checklist to all ISU Extension and Farm Service Agency offices, along with safety glasses to distribute to the offices' visitors. The checklist included best practices about site preparation, personal protective equipment, and knowing local burn ordinances. In addition, it reminded people to not use any accelerants, such as gasoline or diesel, to stay with the fire until it is completely burned out, and check old burn piles to watch for hot spots that may rekindle. A pdf file of the printable card can be found on the [I-CASH website](http://www.i-cash.org).



As the COVID-19 pandemic continues to hold our attention and strain health care resources, it is more important than ever to employ safety practices on the farm. Now is not the time to have to go to the emergency department because of a preventable incident.

Visit [www.i-cash.org](http://www.i-cash.org) for a full list of Seasonal Campaigns.

### Online Training Protecting Young Workers in Agriculture

Do you train, supervise or hire young agricultural workers? As the summer agricultural season is ramping up, it is a great time to think about how to protect the safety and health of adolescent and young adult workers who are at higher risk of injury. A freely available, evidence-based training developed with the National Children's Center for Rural and Agricultural Health and Safety can assist supervisors, parents, and teachers with topics such as best practices in supervision, training adolescents and young adults more effectively, facilitating difficult conversations, considering updates in workplace policies, and more. The training and supplemental materials can be found at: <https://hwc.public-health.uiowa.edu>

Here's what people are saying about the training:

- *"Really good information; things I'll be able to use when working with youth on our farm. We are very aware of what a dangerous line of work we are in!"* – Iowa Farmer
- *"I have completed the training and thought the training information was presented well and would like my supervisors to also participate. I also like that there is a Certificate of Training Completion available once the training is complete."* – HR Manager
- *"I am impressed with the high quality of the writing, organizational structure of the material, and the insight of the key messaging."* – Senior Safety Consultant

## I-CASH Awards Agricultural Youth Grants for 2020

by Stephanie McMillan, I-CASH Program Assistant

Each year I-CASH provides funds for small grants to community youth groups for farm safety-related projects. This year six projects were funded.

### Fayette County Extension

Fayette County 4-H Council Members and FFA youth will work together to plan a farm safety day targeting upper elementary and middle school youth. They will be providing education on the importance of staying alert and attentive on a farm.

### Ida County Farm Bureau

Ida County youth will be assisting at a farm safety day by managing education stations covering topics of machinery safety, animal safety, grain bin safety, ATVs, poisonous weeds, and chemicals.

### Louisa County Extension

Louisa County youth will be planning topics to be included in a farm safety day and assisting with the production of safety videos after the event. The videos will cover the following topics: power take-off (PTO), first aid, grain bin safety, animal safety, helmet safety, fire safety, water safety, sun safety, and extreme weather preparation.

### Mitchell County Extension

The Mitchell County Council and Intermediate Leadership League will prepare and distribute safety goodie bags, including personal protective equipment and safety handouts, at the Mitchell County Ag Breakfast.

### Washington County

Washington County 4-H members conduct a project titled “Stay Safe, Take a Break” where students deliver items intended to promote health and safety to farmers during the long hours of harvest.

### Wright County Farm Bureau

Eagle Grove FFA students will assist with a safety day camp, specifically their role is focusing on the animal handling portion of farm safety. They will teach 3rd graders how to stay safe around livestock and pets.

Visit [www.i-cash.org](http://www.i-cash.org) for more information the Agricultural Youth Grant program.



The Cherokee County Farm Bureau received grant funds in 2019 for a farm safety day with hands-on opportunities to learn about safety.

## National Farm Safety and Health Week - September 20-26, 2020

The theme for National Farm Safety and Health Week 2020 is **Every Farmer Counts**. This theme reminds us to prioritize the health and safety of those who work hard to provide our abundant supply of food, fiber and fuel.

Along with the theme for the week, the daily topics of focus are as follows:

- Monday - Tractor Safety & Rural Roadway Safety
- Tuesday - Overall Farmer Health
- Wednesday - Safety & Health for Youth in Agriculture
- Thursday - Emergency Preparedness in Agriculture
- Friday - Safety & Health for Women in Agriculture

Visit [www.necasag.org](http://www.necasag.org) for more information and resources related to the campaign.



# Midwest Rural Agricultural Safety and Health Conference: *Rising to New Challenges*



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

Join us for the 2020 Midwest Rural Agricultural Safety and Health (MRASH) Conference, scheduled for November 17-18. ***Rising to New Challenges*** is the conference theme, and true to our theme and uncertainties we currently face, the conference will be a hybrid incorporating both online and face-to-face components.

The Heartland Acres Agribition Center in Independence, Iowa will be the site of our in-person activities. The complex features an event center, an agricultural museum and the ISU Extension Office. It is the site for a farm safety day camp each spring for over 200 second graders, and future home of the Buchanan County Freedom Rock. If necessary, the full conference may be moved online. We have some exciting ideas planned for ways to bring the local flavor to our online elements.



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 good 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.

A highlight of the conference is the collection of interesting research and outreach projects many of you conduct across the Midwest and beyond. Please consider submitting one or more abstracts. You can elect to present your topic in a 20-minute presentation, organize a 60-minute roundtable topic around several related projects, or develop a poster. The conference [website](#) will be open for submissions June 1 through July 10; links will also be on both [I-CASH](#) and [GPCAH](#) websites. Check the site for additional information as it becomes available.

## NECAS Adds Second Mobile Grain Entrapment Simulator

by Dan Neenan, MBA, Paramedic, Director, NECAS, Safety, Transportation, and EMS

The National Education Center for Agricultural Safety (NECAS) is proud to announce the addition of a second mobile Grain Entrapment Simulator. With funding from Nationwide Insurance and Corteva Agriscience, and donations from KC Supply, Hawkeye Electric, and Sump Saver, the new trailer is set to hit the road this summer. Last year in support of safety campaigns for Nationwide and Corteva, NECAS delivered grain rescue tubes and trained 55 fire departments in 23 states. The 2020 locations have not been determined yet, but it is expected that a similar number of deliveries and trainings will occur this year.



This year is setting up to be a dangerous year for grain entrapments, with last year's harvest being late and put away with a high moisture content. The additional unit will allow us to provide more training to farmers on the safe ways to enter the confined space, and to fire departments on how to successfully extricate someone trapped in grain. For more information call NECAS at (888) 844-6322.

# NEWS AND UPDATES



**Agricultural Safety and Health: The Core Course** is underway this week (June 8-12). Originally scheduled to be held at the University of Iowa, the course is being delivered virtually to 25 participants from 12 different states. The training includes live lectures provided via zoom, and online training modules and activities. Visit [www.gpcah.org](http://www.gpcah.org) for course locations and dates.

## GPCAH Pilot Grants due July 1, 2020

The Center funds pilot grant projects (up to \$30,000 per project) to community members and academic researchers intending to promote innovative outreach and research efforts to prevent agricultural injury and illness. Learn more at <http://bit.ly/2XGoAcu>. Keep an eye on our [website](#) for updates and follow us on Facebook and Twitter @GPCAH (#GPCAHPILOTS | #USAGCENTERS | #FARMSAFETY).

## 2020 Farm Progress Show Health & Safety Tent update

The 2020 Farm Progress Show is still scheduled for September 1-3 and is working to provide a safe venue - more information is available at <https://www.farmprogressshow.com>. However, due to the uncertainties involving the coronavirus pandemic, and concerns related to mass gatherings, the Iowa Department of Public Health will not coordinate or allow personnel to participate at the site with the Health & Safety Tent. Contact Kathy Leinenkugel at [kathy.leinenkugel@idph.iowa.gov](mailto:kathy.leinenkugel@idph.iowa.gov) for additional information.

Key pieces of the **ISASH 2020** annual conference will be offered online throughout the summer. The Professional Improvement Committee is expecting more than 30 presentations (oral, poster and educational), which will be grouped and presented online at times and dates TBA. Visit [www.isash.org](http://www.isash.org) for details.

## Upcoming Events

June 16-19

**National Rural Health Association Annual Conference**  
Virtual Event

July 13-15

**ASABE Annual International Meeting**  
Virtual Event

July 14-17

**Agricultural Health and Safety Course**  
Virtual Event

September 1-3

**Farm Progress Show**  
Boone, IA

September 15-17

**Husker Harvest Days**  
Grand Island, NE

September 20-26

**National Farm Safety and Health Week**

September 21-23

**Ag Innovation Showcase**  
Minneapolis, MN

September 29 - October 1

**National Association of County Agricultural Agents Annual Meeting and Conference**  
Virginia Beach, VA

November 17-18

**Midwest Rural Agricultural Safety and Health Conference**  
Independence, IA



## MSU Farm Stress Study

Michigan State University Extension is conducting a study about using text message reminders to give farmers resources about managing stress. Eligible farmers can earn \$40 in Amazon e-gift cards for completing two surveys and receiving text messages over 12 weeks. Selected participants will receive an additional \$20 for a phone interview. If you or someone you know is interested, visit the following website and complete the eligibility survey: [https://www.canr.msu.edu/managing\\_farm\\_stress/farm-stress](https://www.canr.msu.edu/managing_farm_stress/farm-stress)



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