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ENHANCING THE HEALTH  
OF AGRICULTURAL,  
FORESTRY AND  
FISHING WORKERS

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## MISSION

To enhance the health of agricultural, forestry, and fishing (AgFF) workers by identifying priority health and safety issues and working with AgFF communities and stakeholders to develop prevention solutions.

## CREDITS

All content writers: Northeast Center staff  
Design: Iron Design  
Photos: supplied



## MESSAGE FROM OUR DIRECTOR

As many have observed over the centuries, great achievements are rarely the work of a single individual; instead, they result from the collective effort of a committed team. Over the years, we have been very fortunate to have a particularly talented and dedicated team of researchers, trainers, medical staff, safety professionals, administrators, and support staff working diligently day in and day out to serve workers and rural communities. Their unwavering commitment has played an essential role in addressing the challenges faced by these communities, facilitating recovery for injured workers, and providing vital support during trying times.

Below is a small sample of anecdotes of support and gratitude from individuals who've engaged with our staff:



**Julie Sorensen, PhD**  
Director, Northeast Center

### **Heather Chauncey, Farm Partners**

**Program Coordinator:** "I am happy to know that there are caring people out there as the folks at the Northeast Center. I appreciate Heather's diligence and support over the last two years....I consider her an angel. I can't thank you all enough for your support."

Tom Hayes, farmer

These quotes speak volumes about the profound impact of our work. Each story serves as a reminder that every initiative, every program, and every moment of care contributes to the well-being of farmers, loggers, fishermen and rural communities across our regions.

As we look toward 2025, it is clear that while challenges may arise, they also present opportunities for innovation and growth. I am confident that the coming year will provide even more opportunities to demonstrate what persistence, dedication and teamwork can achieve. Here's to an inspiring year ahead!

### **Duane Martin, ROPS Hotline**

**Coordinator:** "Clinton Tractor is very happy working with the National ROPS Rebate Program. It is a great program to get ROPS installed on as many of the non-ROPS tractors that are out there. Duane Martin and his staff go above and beyond to help the dealer get their customers taken care of."

Chris Calidonna, tractor and equipment dealer

**NEC Safety Trainers:** "By working with certified health and safety trainers, our entire team stays updated on the latest protocols, reminding each other of the importance of those best management practices."

Hannah Worden, farmer



# AWARDS & RECOGNITIONS

## NY BEEF PRODUCERS' ASSOCIATION FRIEND OF THE INDUSTRY AWARD

At the NY Beef Producers Association annual meeting in January, we received the Friend of the Industry Award for our support and presence in the NY beef industry. Our Director, Julie Sorensen, noted, "We are so grateful to be recognized with the Friend of the Industry Award at the New York Beef Producer's Association Annual Conference! It is a testament to the hard work, dedication, and passion we share for ensuring a safe and thriving future in NY's beef industry. Our John May Farm Safety Fund continues to be a great asset to not only beef producers, but to farmers in all industries."

Director Julie Sorensen and Outreach Coordinator Dahlia Sheehan-Yassin after receiving the Friend of the Industry Award.



## AGRISAFE NURSE SCHOLAR

In April, Occupational Health Nurse Judy Graham was selected to participate in the AgriSafe Nurse Scholar program, a distance learning opportunity designed for rural nurses. During the program, experienced health and safety educators shared their expertise in prevention, identification, and assessment of health risks related to agricultural work exposures. Classes were in the form of webinars to be viewed on the nurses' own time. Upon completion of the course in June, Judy received 23 hours of continuing nursing education through the University of Nebraska Medical Center. As the scholarship recipient, the cost of the course was covered, and the registration fee was waived.



Occupational Health Nurse  
Judy Graham, RN, COHN

## EXCELLUS BLUECROSS BLUESHIELD CIRCLE OF EXCELLENCE AWARD

In October, our Clinical Case Manager Heather Chauncey was named the 2024 Circle of Excellence Award winner by Excellus BlueCross BlueShield (BCBS) for her work in health equity. Utica Regional President of Excellus BCBS Tony Vitagliano wrote: "We developed the Circle of Excellence awards to recognize those who work in partnership with us to look at different ways to deliver high-quality care, and we're very happy to recognize Bassett Healthcare and NYCAMH for their innovative work and community impact."



Clinical Case Manager Heather Chauncey with her award, flanked by Northeast Center and Excellus BCBS staff

Since joining our staff in 2022, Heather has made a remarkable impact on the people we serve. In overseeing the Farm Partners Program, she provides free and confidential case management and counseling to the farming community as well as to individuals with occupational health concerns. She connects her clients with a wide array of resources and assists in filing and applying for needed services. The Farm Partners Program also provides funding and resources to assist farm families with unexpected expenses arising from emergencies. Through Heather's hard work, she obtained the first farm vehicle modification for a disabled farmer in 20 years. Heather's ongoing advocacy has raised awareness across New York State about farmers and loggers in need of adaptive equipment and mental health services.

## **JULIE SORENSEN RECEIVES NEW YORK STATE ASSOCIATION FOR RURAL HEALTH SENATOR PATRICIA M. MCGEE AWARD**

In November, Director Julie Sorensen received the Senator Patricia M. McGee Award from the New York State Association for Rural Health. Formerly the Award of Merit, this award is given to an individual who has made an outstanding contribution of major significance to improve the health of rural populations.

Julie was recognized for her ability to combine compassionate, collaborative leadership with rigorous, innovative research to identify, test, and implement evidence-based programs that will improve the lives of worker populations. Central to her efforts is her commitment to listening to workers and collaborating with them on solutions. Throughout her career, she has integrated her education, experience, and skills into leading the Northeast Center with an extraordinary vision that is fueled by passion, humility, and curiosity.



Director Julie Sorensen with New York State Association for Rural Health Senator Patricia M. McGee Award



Left to right: NEDPA Director Tonya Van Slyke, Director Julie Sorensen, ROPS Hotline Coordinator Duane Martin

## **NORTHEAST DAIRY PRODUCERS ASSOCIATION DIRECTOR TONYA VAN SLYKE IS OUR HERO**

In December, we gave our 2024 Hero Award to Northeast Dairy Producers Association Director Tonya Van Slyke. The award was created to recognize the extraordinary accomplishments of an individual or community partner whose work has enhanced agricultural safety and health in New York. In conferring the award, we cited Director Van Slyke for her effort to support farm families and workers in the dairy industry by raising awareness of the importance of safety training, calling attention to emerging issues, and supporting efforts to improve workforce management.

## **IN MEMORIAM SENATOR JAMES SEWARD**

In August, New York State Senator James Seward, a long-time friend and supporter of our organization and of the farming community, lost his courageous battle with cancer. “Senator Seward was absolutely central in legislative efforts to provide tractor rollbar rebate funds for New York farmers and was a constant companion and essential ally in securing our recent budgetary increase, to name just a few of his many contributions,” said Director Julie Sorensen. “We owe much to his tireless efforts on behalf of agriculture, and there are a significant number of farmers who have avoided death and injury as a result of his support. We were so lucky to have worked with him and found his consistent good humor and positive outlook throughout his battle with cancer inspiring.”



New York State Senator James Seward

# GLOBAL CONNECTIONS

Commercial fishermen and other workers employed in the aquatic food supply chain navigate workplace hazards on a daily basis, giving rise to the industry's reputation for being one of the most dangerous occupations in the world. The United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) estimates that roughly 80 fishing industry workers across the globe die every day. Some of the most vulnerable workers are small-scale fishers, who lack access to basic equipment, such as weather alerts, lifejackets, or ship-to-shore communications.

Addressing these and other emerging issues will be a challenging prospect in the coming years, especially with the increase in severe weather events and industry volatility. Given the need for global cooperation and creative solutions, the Northeast Center, the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH), and FAO partnered to organize the sixth International Fishing Industry Safety and Health Conference (IFISH6) at FAO Headquarters in Rome, Italy, in January 2024. About 160 participants attended from 31 countries, making it one of the largest and most diverse gatherings of advocates focused on the occupational health and safety of aquatic food supply workers in



Fishing Partnership Support Services team at IFISH6

the world. Attendees took part in plenary sessions, workshops, panel discussions, poster sessions, and networking events.

These sessions focused on a number of occupational health and safety concerns for fishery workers, but also highlighted promising solutions for improving worker safety and well-being. Participants also shared feedback on emerging occupational health and safety concerns, such as psychosocial issues, overdose

deaths, the impact of fishery management decisions on worker safety, climate change, loss of trained crew, access to healthcare and safety equipment, violence stemming from local conflicts or competition for coastal resources, and other workplace hazards. Feedback from participants was compiled by the IFISH6 Planning Committee and FAO to share with the Committee on Fisheries (COFI), a subsidiary body of FAO. This feedback will help inform future international policy and initiatives.

As well as providing feedback on emerging issues and potential solutions, the Northeast Center, NIOSH, and FAO organized a workshop entitled "IFISH Innovation Exchanges," which focused on identifying opportunities for continuing research

Co-organizers Drs. Julie Sorensen, Jennifer Lincoln (NIOSH), and Florence Poulain (FAO)



and advocating engagement in between conferences. The concept was well received and participants discussed how to develop an effective engagement tool. In particular, we discussed the need for an online platform where various workgroups could share information, questions, and solutions either through written materials, workgroup sessions, or presentations. The ability to encourage in-person, peer-to-peer missions focused on mentorship, publication, or intervention translation was also widely supported. The IFISH Planning Committee has already made steps to provide these resources and feature them at the next IFISH gathering.

In 2025, we will continue to work with the IFISH Planning Committee to organize the next conference. Participants have already offered input on a desired location and timing, which will be essential for making IFISH7 as successful as the conference in Rome. Thanks to all who helped make this event a memorable one!



From top clockwise:  
 Reception hall at  
 FAO Headquarters,  
 Rome, Italy;  
 Group photo of  
 attendees; Opening  
 night reception;  
 Stability vessel  
 demonstration



# GLOBAL CONNECTIONS

## INTERNATIONAL UNION OF FORESTRY RESEARCH ORGANIZATIONS

Since 1896, the International Union of Forestry Research Organizations (IUFRO) has held world congresses to bring together the latest findings across all forestry disciplines. In June, Dr. Erika Scott traveled to Stockholm, Sweden, for an

IUFRO session on forest operations, where she presented “Work-related injury and chronic health issues among logging workers in the Northeast United States.”

An important part of the IUFRO World Congress was getting out into the field to see

the latest innovations in Swedish forestry operations. Attendees traveled west of Stockholm to a woodlot near Eskilstuna to view planting, harvesting, grading, and more. Sweden made a major push throughout the last century to reforest and manage their woodlands and has a keen eye toward the health and safety of those who work in the woods.



Forest operations in Eskilstuna, Sweden

## INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY FOR AGRICULTURAL SAFETY AND HEALTH

Four Northeast Center staff members traveled to Portland, Oregon, in June to attend the 2024 International Society for Agricultural Safety and Health (ISASH). Dr. Julie Sorensen was joined by Dr. Florence Becot from Penn State University to deliver a plenary session presentation on the challenges facing occupational safety and health researchers; and Dr. Mandy Roome presented the latest findings from her team’s study on mitigating the risk of tickborne diseases for agricultural workers in Southern Vermont. Outreach/Education Supervisor Pauline Boyer and Farm Services Navigator Christina Day attended as well to learn about the conference and prepare for the Northeast Center’s hosting responsibilities in 2025.

## FISH PLATFORM

In November, Dr. Julie Sorensen attended the Fishing Industry’s Safety and Health (FISH) Platform meeting in Capetown, South Africa. Formed in 2012, the FISH Platform includes some of the world’s leading group of experts involved in safety and health in the fishing industry.

Dr. Sorensen shared a presentation on the IFISH Innovation Exchange and how FISH Platform efforts might align with IFISH initiatives and objectives. Her presentation focused on how to increase innovation and how scientific research can be better disseminated to researchers and used by the industry through the planned IFISH Innovation Exchange. The online Innovation Exchange Hub aims to connect scientists, trainers, advocates, and industries with practical occupational health and safety solutions.



Rescue demonstration at North American Manure Expo, Auburn, NY

## NORTH AMERICAN MANURE EXPO

The North American Manure Expo (NAME) was hosted by New York State for the first time, and our staff were on hand to take part in the Expo’s safety school and offer skin cancer screenings to attendees.

Held in July at Patterson Farms near Auburn, NY, NAME featured two days of speakers, demonstrations, and vendors. Our staff delivered training on the use of slow moving vehicle signs for tractors and implements, teaming up with current NYS Troopers, to demonstrate the importance of roadway safety for both farmers and other motorists. The safety school also included expert guidance on dragline and pump safety, pressurized hose release, and confined space entry.

Our mobile clinic also stayed busy, performing skin cancer screenings for show participants. We also offered PPE sales and further information about our services available across the New York State.





# INJURY SURVEILLANCE RESEARCH

## MACHINE LEARNING ADVANCEMENTS

Over the years, our surveillance research team has witnessed the transition from carbon copy paper records to electronic medical records, and the change from basic computing (floppy discs, anyone?!) to the explosive growth in computing power and machine learning. This constant technology change requires continual learning and adaptation. Fortunately, it also means the opportunity to refine our methods and make the surveillance system more robust.

We previously developed a naive Bayes-based classification strategy to extract non-fatal injury cases from pre-hospital care reports, also known as Emergency Medical Services (EMS) records. In the spirit of continual improvement, the aim of our most recent work has been to improve retrieval rates by benchmarking the reference naive Bayes against three other algorithms: elastic net regression, Support Vector Machines, and boosted decision trees (XGBoost).

**Here's what we learned after benchmarking these algorithms on complete case data (N = 44,566):**

**1** While all models produced similarly accuracies (0.96 to 0.98), XGBoost performed best related to false positive rates

**2** All four models perform well on complete data; however, our dataset contains missing units, resulting in misclassification and omissions, ultimately requiring additional human coding

**3** Reliance on a machine learning method that is robust related to missing data and imputation method, such as XGBoost, is a reasonable approach to improving classification rates without omitting data

Our surveillance team continues to evaluate methods to enhance the system, especially related to missing data. In addition, newer data are being continually evaluated.

### Expanding Surveillance Sources to Include Public Data and Near Misses

We work diligently to establish data use agreements (DUA) for pre-hospital care reports and hospitalization data throughout the Northeast. We use these data as the basis for our injury surveillance system. There are times when administrative burdens slow down the DUA process, or we are unable to secure data for a given state. Considering this, we are filling in the gaps using tailored news alerts for fatalities, injuries, as well as near misses (frequently property damage). We obtain these data through partner programs, such as AgInjuryNews, but also through our own news searching alerts. While not a comprehensive look at all injuries, these sources allow us to have up-to-date data, which are important teaching tools for our education and outreach staff's curriculum.

### Advising on National Surveillance Strategy

Deputy Director Dr. Erika Scott continues to work with the NIOSH Office of Agricultural Safety and Health (OASH) through an Intergovernmental Personnel Act (IPA) to advance agricultural, forestry, and fishing (AgFF) injury surveillance on a national scale. This initiative includes:

- Continued leadership for Surveillance Working Group meetings
- Outreach efforts to the Council of State and Territorial Epidemiologists (CSTE) and NIOSH funded state occupational health surveillance programs as the coordinator for internal and external AgFF surveillance efforts through OASH
- Continued discussion with partners on barriers, facilitators, and incentives to advance AgFF surveillance activities
- Identifying areas of collaboration and/or utilization of existing NIOSH data/resources
- Creation of a report on the future for AgFF injury surveillance
- Pilot testing an occupational health indicator specific to the agriculture industry with our partners



# FISHING

## IN THE WHEELHOUSE

In our ongoing study, In the Wheelhouse: Empowering Fishermen through Community Partnerships to Improve Health and Safety, we have two objectives: to collect health assessment data and connect remote fishermen to accessible healthcare services. We made two trips to Maine in 2024 and provided health assessments to 107 lobstermen, diggers, and crew members from Stonington and Vinalhaven. We measured blood pressure, cholesterol, A1C (risk for diabetes), respiratory health, and included a physical exam with a doctor, along with two surveys on overall health, barriers to care, and health concerns. Results indicated nearly 1 in 7 fishermen reporting excessive anxiety over the past year, with common concerns including musculoskeletal pain, substance use, and stress, with half of the fishermen noting back pain within the last year.

**Financial worries compounded health challenges, with nearly half of the fishermen in Stonington and over 1/3 in Vinalhaven relying on self-payment for medical expenses. Around half of all fishermen worried they would be unable to afford necessary medical care.**

health through tailored wellness services. In addition to health assessments, fishermen will be encouraged to voice their concerns and ideas, ensuring the program addresses the unique needs of this community.

The program's impact will be evaluated with follow-up health assessments in 2026 for fishermen in both Stonington and Vinalhaven.

In response, we are collaborating with local organizations to pilot the Healthy Harvesters Program in Stonington, Maine. This program will be supported by a dedicated Community Health Worker, with a focus on improving fishermen's

## RESEARCH-TO-PRACTICE INCUBATOR HONES IN ON INNOVATION

Launched in 2023, the research to practice (r2p) incubator project is designed to encourage the development and adoption of new ideas to improve the health and safety of loggers, farmers, and commercial fishermen.

In 2024, we awarded Farrell Davis, a Cape Cod-based scallop fishing deckhand and research technologist at Coonamesset Farm Foundation, with incubator funding for his proposal to develop an ergonomically improved handle for scallop-shucking knives. Upon acceptance, Farrell attended a month-long customer discovery workshop through Cornell University's Interior Northeast I-Corps Hub. We assisted Farrell in the development of a survey for scallop shuckers that captures information about the pain they experience, the cost of purchasing and maintaining their knives, measurements of their knives and their hands, 3D scans of knife handles, and feedback on different 3D printing materials that could be used to develop a more ergonomic knife. Farrell is administering the survey to shuckers this winter and will use the results to develop a prototype in spring 2025.

We have been sharing the incubator idea with many audiences, and conducting interviews with innovators and incubator leaders. From these discussions, we've added a new component to the incubator: a multi-module workshop on the entrepreneurial mindset geared toward AgFF health and safety solutions. Advisory board members are developing and presenting the content.



IdeasThatWork is the new name and brand for the r2p incubator.

Members of In the Wheelhouse team. From L to R: Northeast Center staff Judy Graham and Brian Quinn, and fisherman Beba Rosen from Vinalhaven.



## INTERNATIONAL PFD WORKING GROUP

The International Personal Flotation Device (PFD) Working Group developed as our response to a panel discussion among safety researchers at the fifth International Fishing Industry Safety and Health Conference (IFISH5) in 2018. Held in St. John's, Newfoundland, IFISH5 was organized by the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH), Memorial University, and the Northeast Center.

At IFISH5, we partnered with national and international commercial fishing safety researchers to organize a panel discussion about changing commercial fishing PFD use behavior. The panel was well attended and the safety researchers who participated strongly advocated for keeping the conversation and collaboration going. In response, we agreed to organize an international work group of commercial fishing researchers interested in the topic of lifejacket use. Over the years, the number of work group attendees has grown considerably and now includes over 60 international researchers, safety trainers, and interested parties.

The International PFD Workgroup has continued to meet quarterly using an online platform to network, share resources, and further progress in eliminating overboard deaths in the fishing industry. Recordings of recent

presentations can be found on the IFISH website (scan QR code).

If interested in learning more about this international

group of commercial fishing safety researchers, contact [info@necenter.org](mailto:info@necenter.org).



**NOT A LIFE PRESERVER.  
A LEGACY PRESERVER.**



PFDs... they're infinitely lighter, less bulky, and easier to work in than they used to be. Fishing is a tradition, so put on your PFD and help keep a good thing going!



**HOW TO SURVIVE GOING OVERBOARD**



**1 - 10 - 1**

**MINUTE** Cold shock sets in  
**MINUTES** Loss of effective use of your limbs for any meaningful movement  
**HOUR** Hypothermia sets in

A LIFE JACKET DRAMATICALLY INCREASES YOUR ODDS OF MAKING IT THROUGH EACH PHASE OF A COLD WATER IMMERSION.



## PROMOTING LIFEJACKET USE REMAINS A PRIORITY

We at the Northeast Center are proud to continue our commitment to promoting lifejacket use among commercial fishermen with the Lifejackets for Fishermen program. One of our key partners, Fishing Partnership Support Services (FPSS), has played a vital role in the initiative by providing lifejackets at a discounted cost to fishermen who attend a safety or first aid/CPR training or meet with FPSS staff.

This year alone, over 160 lifejackets have been distributed.

Building on the success of the original Lifejackets for Lobstermen project, the rebranded Lifejackets for Fishermen initiative is now inclusive to all fishermen in the Northeast. The mission is simple: to raise awareness of the risks of fishing without a PFD, to normalize lifejacket use, and ultimately, to reduce the number of fatalities from falls overboard.

Recent data from the U.S. Coast Guard on lifejacket use has shown an increase in observed lifejacket wear rates among Northeast commercial fishermen.

### LIFEJACKET DATA

In 2022, **31%** of crew (1,409 of 4,576 total crew) were observed wearing PFDs during fishing vessel boardings. This **increased to 48%** in both 2023 and 2024 (1,197 out of 2,506 total crew, and 983 out of 2,025 total crew, respectively).

As the Northeast Center, FPSS, and their partners continue to address barriers through Lifejackets for Fishermen, we look forward to seeing more fishermen protecting themselves by wearing lifejackets at sea.



# FORESTRY

## LOCATION OF INTERVIEWS



### LOGGING EMERGING ISSUES

In 2023, we secured funding for a small study investigating emerging health and safety issues in the industry, allowing us to stay up to date on relevant concerns of loggers in the Northeast and gain diverse perspectives from across the region.

Research Coordinator Madeleine Zenir conducted interviews with loggers in New York, and our colleague Pat Donnelly of West Virginia University completed the interviews in his home state and in Pennsylvania. In total, thirty loggers took the time to sit down with us and share their perspectives. The individuals we spoke to included business owners and employees, mechanized and conventional operations, representing a variety of ages and business sizes. While every logger had their own story, many shared similar concerns and experiences.

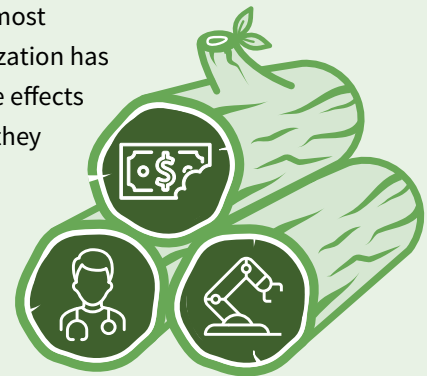
After reviewing the qualitative data collected during the interviews, we identified three common themes. First, almost every interview mentioned that **financial stress** feels inherent to being a logger. Many of the loggers indicated that **mechanization of the industry** has changed the nature of the timber market, making it more difficult to predict prices and causing instability and stress. Second, most mentioned that while mechanization has improved safety, it has negative effects on their health. Loggers noted they find themselves in machines for many hours, leading to



Research Coordinator Madeleine Zenir interviews logger on the job

weight gain and cardiovascular health risks for some. The third theme was the issue of **accessible health insurance options** for small logging operations. Many rely on their spouse's employment to provide health insurance and others simply are not covered.

The information gathered from these interviews will drive our future studies and influence our outreach strategies for helping loggers in the Northeast.



### HEALTH AND SAFETY AT FORESTRY/LOGGING MEETINGS

#### West Virginia Tethered Logging Demo and Training, Bruceton Mills, WV

In May 2024, we had an opportunity to be a part of the program for West Virginia University (WVU) Safety and Health Extension's first Tethered/Winch Assist Steep Slope Logging Demonstration and Training in Bruceton Mills, WV. Participants from around the world and across the United States and Canada gathered to learn about the safety and productivity aspects of three different systems: New Zealand's Falcon Winch Assist, Austria's

T Winch, and Canada's Timbermax Traction Winch. Deputy Director and Logging Principal Investigator Dr. Erika Scott presented our research there, watched the equipment in action, and had an in-person meeting with our friends and colleagues Pat Donnelly, Wayne Lundstrom, and Mark Fullen of the WVU Timber Safe program.



Dr. Scott and Pat Donnelly, WVU Safety & Health Research Assistant, Timber Safe (Northeast Center Collaborator)

## NEW TRAINING FOR PROFESSIONAL LOGGERS

In 2024 the Northeast Center began a partnership with the New York Empire State Forest Products Association to offer new training classes for New York loggers to satisfy their continuing education requirements. These classes focus on preventing physical and mental health issues, as well as safety-related concerns that are prevalent in today's logging workforce.

We launched our safety curriculum in September 2024 with a comprehensive, full-day emergency response training that covered American Heart Association (AHA) CPR and First Aid, Stop the Bleed®, and Naloxone for Opioid Overdose Prevention.

In rural areas such as remote logging sites, emergency services may not be able to get to the scene very quickly; and uncontrolled bleeding due to an injury can be fatal in as little as five minutes. Stop the Bleed® training provided participants with the life-saving skills to properly apply pressure, pack a wound, and use a tourniquet to control blood loss.

Opioid overdose has become a leading cause of death. As with uncontrolled bleeding, being able to respond quickly and effectively

to an opioid overdose is essential and challenging in a remote logging site. Naloxone (Narcan) is an opioid antidote that reverses an overdose. The Naloxone for Opioid Overdose Prevention training provided an overview of opioid drugs, substance use disorder, overdose symptoms, and naloxone administration.

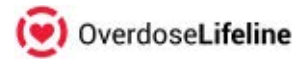
The all-day emergency response class combined hands-on activities, slide presentations, and group discussion. In addition, Stop the Bleed® emergency kits and overdose rescue kits were supplied to each attendee. These trainings will be offered two more times during the fall and winter of 2024-2025.

We are also developing a health curriculum scheduled for rollout in the spring of 2025. This curriculum will take a preventive approach

to health-related topics identified through our five-year research study on the health and safety issues faced by Maine loggers and the interviews we conducted with Pennsylvania, West Virginia, and New York loggers in 2023. Classes will focus on interventions designed to improve cardiovascular and musculoskeletal health, including making healthy food choices while on the road and in the woods, ergonomics, enhancing muscle and joint flexibility, managing stress effectively, and incorporating more movement into the workday to counteract the effects of long hours sitting in machinery.

These classes aim to provide a foundational understanding of how changes in the logging industry, particularly mechanization, have contributed to an increased incidence of cardiovascular disease and musculoskeletal injuries. Given that professional logging can be a highly stressful occupation, the health curriculum will also explore the intersection of stress and job satisfaction, emphasizing how stress that can lead to depression and substance use disorders.

With these classes we hope we can help improve the well-being of the professional logging workforce.



### Council on Forest Engineering (COFE), Moscow, ID

COFE is an international professional organization promoting the best methods of managing and operating forests. For the first time, safety, health, and workforce development was highlighted as a distinct track at the 2024 Annual Meeting, which was hosted by the University of Idaho's College of Natural Resources and Experimental Forest on May 21-24 in Moscow, Idaho. Dr. Erika Scott presented "Challenges in Addressing Injury and Chronic Health Issues among Logging Workers" and had the opportunity to network with forestry researchers from North America, Europe, and beyond.

# EMERGING ISSUES

## HELPING BLUESTONE WORKERS BREATHE EASY

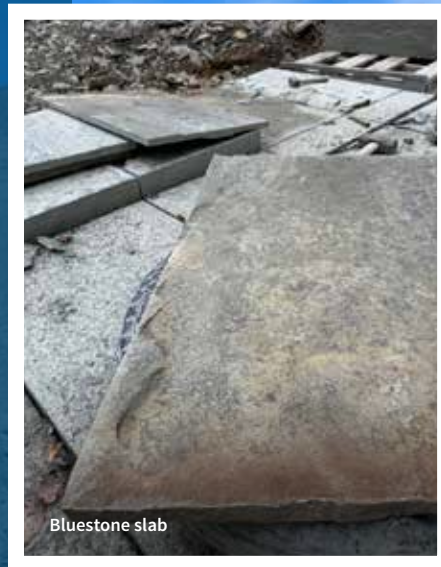
The quarrying of bluestone has been a main source of income in New York and Pennsylvania stemming back to the mid-1800s. Most quarries in the area are run by families or those who have had quarrymen in their family for generations. Bluestone is a valuable resource that is only found in this part of the country, and brings millions of dollars to New York and Pennsylvania's economies. While it is important to protect the livelihood of bluestone quarrying, it is most important to protect the individuals who work with bluestone.

Bluestone contains high levels of silicates, which are released as a fine dust when the stone is cut or crushed. The dust, which is often invisible to the naked eye, can travel deep within the lungs and causes severe damage. This exposure leads to difficulty breathing, and a debilitating lung disease called silicosis. In recent years, local healthcare providers have noticed an increasing trend of silicosis among full-time and part-time quarrymen. If silicosis goes undetected and advances into late stages, the only curative treatment is a lung transplant. Fortunately, it is very feasible to harvest bluestone safely if the proper precautions are taken to reduce harmful dust exposure.

We are working on pilot research to understand the barriers workers face when it comes to safely handling bluestone. Specifically designed for small-scale quarrymen and masons, this project is measuring respiratory health, fit testing for respiratory protection, and evaluating simple, low-cost solutions to reduce dust exposure.



Bluestone mason Kurt Van Spanje



# EMERGING ISSUES

## HARM REDUCTION TO SAVE LIVES

Harm reduction is a public health philosophy that seeks to minimize the negative consequences of behaviors such as substance use. It embraces a range of strategies from safer use to abstinence, employing a person-centered approach. Recognizing that drug use is a reality in our society, the Northeast Center took several steps to reduce the harmful effects of substance use without downplaying its associated risks.



Narcan kits distributed by Northeast Center

farmworkers and managers on properly storing and administering naloxone, understanding the effects of naloxone, recognizing signs of an opioid overdose, and responding to an opioid emergency.

In August 2024, our staff attended harm reduction training to better equip ourselves with the knowledge and tools to address substance use issues in the communities we serve.

In September 2024, we attended the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention at the “Out of the Darkness” walk for Mental Health Awareness and Suicide Prevention in Oneonta, NY, where we distributed more than 50 naloxone overdose prevention kits along with training.

We hope to reach as many farmers and farmworkers in New York State as possible through our opioid overdose prevention program. Future outreach may include tabling events and clinics that serve firefighters and EMTs, with the potential to expand to farmers, forestry workers, and commercial fishermen throughout the Northeast. Through these efforts, we aim to empower our rural workers and their families with the resources to respond to opioid-related emergencies in their communities.



One critical tool for harm reduction is naloxone (Narcan), a medication that rapidly reverses opioid overdoses. We collaborated with medical staff at our parent organization Bassett Healthcare Network to obtain naloxone kits and educational material through the New York State Department of Health Opioid Overdose Prevention Program.

In May 2024, eleven Northeast Center staff attended a First Responder Naloxone Program train-the-trainer session. Our trainers are providing farms with overdose kits and materials, as well as educating English- and Spanish-speaking

**WHAT TO DO IN CASE OF A SUSPECTED OPIOID EMERGENCY**

**LAY**

- Check for slowed breathing or unresponsiveness.
- Lay the person on their back and tilt the head up.

**SPRAY**

- Insert device into either nostril and press plunger firmly.

**STAY**

- Call 911 immediately and continue to administer doses as needed.

SCAN TO LEARN MORE

Use on opioid. Refer to full Opioid Facts Sheet. 1-hour spray device contains 1 dose. Spray to save every minute. © 2023 Emergent Devices Inc. All rights reserved. Narcan is a registered trademark of Emergent Devices (Emergent), which is a subsidiary of Emergent BioSolutions Inc. #NARCAN-UP-00005-06-2023



# AGRICULTURE

## EXPANDING FOCUS ON MENTAL HEALTH IN AGRICULTURE

At the Northeast Center, we are deeply committed to evolving with the changing needs of the communities we serve. Recently, we have become increasingly concerned about the rising levels of stress and mental health among agricultural populations.

While stress has always been inherent to farming, our interactions with farmers reveal that they are now facing unexpected and, in many cases, unprecedented challenges. A USDA 2020 report highlights a dramatic shift in the dairy industry, where the median herd size has increased from 80 cows or fewer in 1987 to 1,300 cows in 2017. The decline of small dairy farms is being felt most acutely in Minnesota, New York, Pennsylvania, and Wisconsin: Between 2007 and 2017, the number of farms with at least 1,000 cows nearly doubled between 2007 and 2017 and the number of small to medium-sized family farms (10-199 cows) fell by more than a third.\*



Dr. Conor Hammersley is our newest Principal Investigator, with a responsibility for farmer mental health. Pictured here with Center Director Julie Sorensen

Anecdotally, the pressures on small and medium-sized dairy farms are more than just economic, affecting the mental health of individual farmers, their families, and the broader vitality of rural communities.

To support farmers in achieving better mental health outcomes, we need to take a comprehensive approach that considers the broader context in which they live and work. Dr. Conor Hammersley joined our team in 2024 to explore the lived experience of agricultural change and its impact on mental health, farm-family life, and the fabric of rural communities; adapt mental health support programs to reflect what we've learned; and inform policymakers on our results in order to shape supportive policy.

\* MacDonald JM, Law J, Mosheim R. Consolidation in U.S. Dairy Farming. Washington DC: United States Department of Agriculture. 2020

## FARM FIRST RECEIVES NORTHEAST CENTER FUNDING TO SUPPORT FARMER MENTAL HEALTH

In 2023-2024, we awarded an emerging issues grant to Farm First, a Vermont-based organization that supports farmers experiencing stress by connecting them to needed resources through a statewide farmer peer support network and a behavioral screening and intervention tool.



**FarmFirst**  
Resources and support for farmers

Farm First used the funds to update the extensive training they provide for the 15 previously trained peer farmers, train additional peers, and integrate two innovative training delivery methods: podcasts and live trainings offered via Zoom. Podcasts topics included: how to maintain physical health during the farming season; coping with the stress associated with farming; communication and conflict resolution skills; and an overview of key resources available to help farmers in distress.

Farm First also began a new pilot intervention project in 2024 to proactively screen farmers for a range of behavioral health risks, including anxiety, depression, and substance use; and, for those who screen positive, provide rapid, evidence-based interventions in the form of 1-12 meeting sessions. Promoted as a free “well-being check” with follow-up support to help make healthy lifestyle choices, all participants met with a Farm First licensed counselor and received individual brief psychological counseling and informational resources and referrals to other local services to farmers and their workers in Vermont. This grant enabled Farm First to serve 10-15 more farmers and to evaluate their behavioral screening and intervention protocol. The evaluation showed that the average participant reduced their symptoms of mental health distress by about 30% (anxiety and/or depression).



## INCREASING IMPACT WITH MINI-GRANTS AND DEMOS

The year 2024 marked the tenth anniversary of the Northeast Ag Safety and Health Coalition (NEASHC), a professional development and networking program for farm safety and health educators. NEASHC's mission is to create a space for educators to share ideas and identify emerging health and safety issues in the industry while also providing resources for safety demonstrations. A collaboration between the Northeast Center and Penn State University, NEASHC continues to deliver on these foundations while expanding services available to its members.

In 2023, we launched a mini-grant program to provide financial assistance to projects or programs by organizations that provide safety- or health-related services, outreach, or education in rural and/or agricultural areas in our region.

### 2023-2024 NEASHC Mini-Grant Projects

**Eden Township Emergency Management Agency, PA:** Printing 1,000 Amish (plain sector) youth safety activity booklets

**West Virginia University:** Creating ATV curriculum lesson plans and personal protective equipment kits for youth in West Virginia

**UCP of Central Pennsylvania:** Sponsoring health screenings for attendees at Penn State Ag Progress Days

### 2024-2025 NEASHC Mini-Grant Winners

**Vegetable Growers Association of New Jersey:** Stop the Bleed® Training and Kits for New Jersey Farmers

**UCP of Central Pennsylvania:** Health Screenings at Penn State Ag Progress Days

**Clinton Tractor & Implement Co., NY:** Youth SMV Installation Promotion

**University of Maryland Extension:** RF-DASH – Rural Firefighters Delivering Agriculture Safety and Health

An important goal of NEASHC's mission is to develop high-impact, portable safety training demonstrations to make it easier for educators to engage their audiences. At the annual meeting, we presented the ATV/UTV stability demo and the Farm Safety Learning Lab Kit. To date, we have distributed eight training demos (see table) to member states.

DEMO	DESCRIPTION
<b>ATV/UTV Stability</b>	Learn about the center of gravity and stability of an ATV/UTV and how to prevent rollover incidents
<b>Farm Safety Learning Lab</b>	Use activities to address topics such as risk factors, points of peril, PPE, hand signals, and tractor operation
<b>Grain Bin</b>	Understand the dangers of grain entrapment and strategies for prevention and rescue
<b>High-Visibility</b>	Learn about high-visibility clothing and how to prevent run-over by machinery and equipment
<b>Mr. Good Egg</b>	Learn how a ROPS combined with seatbelt use protects the operator in the event of a tractor rollover
<b>Risk Analysis</b>	Use mouse traps to understand how complacency can increase the risk for injury
<b>Wheel of Safety</b>	Spin the wheel to test your knowledge on agriculture health and safety topics
<b>Animal Safety</b>	Learn techniques to work safely around animals



Carotid screening at Penn State Ag Progress Days



# AGRICULTURE

## JOHN MAY FARM SAFETY FUND

Farmers face unforeseen challenges – fluctuating prices, unpredictable weather, sick animals, machinery breakdowns, or long working hours – that can impact their farm’s profitability and viability, and make it difficult to prioritize safety on the farm. The John May Farm Safety Fund (JMFSF) provides financial assistance to help New York farmers safely continue farming their land for years to come. Through this cost-sharing program, we provide safety guidance on farm hazards and support the farmer as they implement safety solutions. Both small and mid-sized farm operations making safety upgrades are awarded up to \$5,000 for creating a safer workplace.

This program is built on decades of past research identifying and implementing effective solutions from the hierarchy of controls that eliminate, substitute, or engineer hazards out of the work

environment. By keeping farmworkers safe, farms can ensure their long-term productivity while preserving resources for future generations.

Our individualized program supports farmers for up to one year as they work on their safety projects. To make the program more accessible, we expanded

our eligibility guidelines in 2024 to allow more farms to qualify for funding. Now, non-dairy farms grossing up to \$1 million and all dairy farms are eligible to apply for funding.

As a result of expanding application guidelines and continued promotion in the farm community, the JMFSF has seen exponential growth in the last few years, with the number of applications received doubling in the last three years. This year we welcomed a new full-time Outreach Coordinator, Dahlia Sheehan-Yassin, to ensure the continued growth and viability of this valuable program.

The John May Farm Safety Fund was initially 100% reliant on generous donors who supported our mission to enhance the health of farmworkers by identifying priority health and safety issues and developing solutions. Today, we continue to receive financial gifts from private donors in addition to obtaining increased funding from the NYS Department of Agriculture & Markets. Since the JMFSF program started in 2016, we have awarded more than \$1.4 million to 343 farmers making safety improvement projects.

Dahlia is excited for the JMFSF’s future. “We are committed to fostering a culture of safety and well-being in our agricultural community,” she said. “We look forward to supporting new and innovative ideas that contribute to safer, healthier farms across New York State.” In 2025, for example, she is working with research and outreach colleagues to identify how JMFSF can help address heat illness.



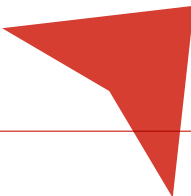
Dahlia Sheehan-Yassin, JMFSF Outreach Coordinator

**“Handling our animals is convenient and enjoyable now. Our daughter even helped. Before, we wouldn’t have wanted her in the pen for safety reasons.”**

Jorgensen Family Farm

**“The cost sharing allowed us to fast track the project and build without cutting corners.”**

Matulewicz Farms



## GROWING SAFETY: EFFORTS TO SCALE THE NATIONAL ROPS REBATE PROGRAM

The National ROPS Rebate Program (NRRP) continues to provide 70% rebates to farmers who purchase and install rollover protective structures (ROPS, also known as rollbars). Since the NRRP launched in 2006 in New York, the team has partnered with agricultural safety and health partners across the country to expand its reach. To date nearly 3,700 farmers in 27 states have installed ROPS through the NRRP, while more than 2,300 farmers in 49 states are currently on a waitlist to participate. Partners at the American Farm Bureau Federation and the Association of Equipment Manufacturers have continued working to support federal funding for this program. If successful, farmers across the country would be able to install life-saving ROPS on their tractors through the NRRP.

In 2024, we wrapped up our final research study of the NRRP. This study aimed to use media advocacy strategies to garner support for the NRRP in three high-risk states: Missouri, Kansas, and Iowa. By definition, media advocacy is the “strategic use of mass media to support community organizing and advance healthy public policy.” Media advocacy uses “authentic voices” (e.g., farmers) and “allies” (e.g., safety partners) to tell a story: in this case, the story of why the NRRP is important not just to farmers and their families, but to entire communities. The end goal of our project was to create tension for change and encourage decision-makers to financially support the NRRP. In addition to our own research staff, the study team included research partners from University of Iowa, University of Nebraska

Medical Center, University of Missouri, and Kansas State University. Though no new funding was secured by the end of the study period, we made significant progress bringing awareness to the issue of tractor overturns, ROPS, and the NRRP. In 2025 we will focus on data analysis and publishing findings from this study. Additionally, we will be working with the project’s media advocacy consultants, Berkeley Media Studies

Group, to develop a media advocacy workbook for occupational safety and health researchers.



Tractor retrofitted by Allen Gage

**“I believe this program is an important program to the community. It gives farmers, farm families and farm workers a peace of mind that whoever is operating that tractor is safe.”**

Allen Gage, Forestville, NY, Chautauqua County



# AGRICULTURE

## OUTREACH AND EDUCATION

Our farm services and educational programming staff work with hundreds of farm businesses every year. These connections keep us in touch with Northeast agriculture and ensure that our offerings stay relevant and responsive to real needs. Typically provided at no cost, our outreach services and programs are offered at the worksite or a convenient central location for participants.

We have farm safety specialists located in multiple states for on-farm visits and training and for phone or video conferencing consultations. They offer an array of trainings related to on-the-job safety for farm employees as well as for owners, managers, and youth.

Many of our trainings have been adapted for videoconferencing, and we continue to build our video collection of safety demonstrations and social media posts.

## SAFETY TRAINING IN ENGLISH

**94** sessions

**821** workers trained

We offer a broad range of topics, from animal handling to zoonotic disease, and continue to develop new modules to cover emerging issues. All training sessions are customized to fit the farm we are visiting and their specific needs.



## TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

**108** farm consultations

Our trainers regularly respond to technical questions related to farm safety and regulatory compliance on farms. Requests are received by phone, email, and in person at trade exhibitions and other outreach events.

## SAFETY TRAINING IN SPANISH

**119** sessions

**2,437** workers trained

All our training topics can be provided in Spanish. Some of the most requested topics include packing house safety, milking parlor safety, fruit & vegetable production/harvest safety, skid steer operation and safety, chemical application and storage safety, sun and heat safety, and worker protection standards.



## ON-FARM SAFETY CONSULTATIONS

**98** on-farm site visits

**146** owner/managers served

During an on-farm safety consultation, our safety specialist tours the farm operation with the owner or a manager to identify specific safety hazards. The safety specialist provides verbal and written recommendations for eliminating, fixing, or mitigating these hazards. These safety surveys provide farm owners and managers one-on-one consultation time to ask questions and receive advice on improving safety and complying with regulatory standards. We also offer the use of GoPro cameras as an option for farmers to film their farm for the survey, which reduces staff travel time and increases the number of farms we can serve.

## FARM EMERGENCY RESPONSE PROGRAM

**56** sessions

**671** workers trained

Farm Emergency Response Program training helps farm workers and farm families learn what to do in an emergency without putting themselves at risk. Our safety educators are now able to offer Stop the Bleed®, a course that teaches life-saving techniques for those first on the scene, as well as American Heart Association CPR, First Aid, fire safety, and fire extinguisher use.



## FARM RESPIRATORY FIT TESTING

**12** regional clinics **4** farms

**327** people fit tested

To keep farmers/farmworkers protected and compliant with OSHA regulations when using pesticides and other dangerous chemicals, we offer respirator fit testing/training at regional clinics each spring and on farms throughout the year for those who were unable to attend the regional clinics.



## YOUTH TRAININGS

**59** sessions

**1,029** youth served

Using a combination of discussions, visuals, and hands-on activities, we gear our safety trainings toward grade school, high school, and college-level students. We use many demonstration modules to make training fun, interesting, and memorable.



## CHAINSAW SAFETY TRAININGS

**14** classes

**119** people trained

Partnering with nationally accredited Game of Logging trainers, we offer a comprehensive training course in chainsaw safety to our farming and rural communities. Combining demonstration with participation, the program allows all attendees to practice the newly acquired chainsaw operation skills.





## ADDRESSING TICKBORNE DISEASE ON FARMS

In 2024, our Vermont Tick Tube Project entered the second and final year of its study on 45 livestock and dairy farms in Southern Vermont. This region has among the highest incidence rates of both Lyme and anaplasmosis in the United States. With each visit to Vermont, we collected ticks on participating farm properties and placed new and collected old Thermacell® Tick Control Tubes. Throughout the study, we collected follow-up surveillance every two weeks to monitor the number of tick encounters by farmers, farmworkers, and farm animals. Encounters included ticks found crawling on or biting individuals that had likely been picked up on the farm property.

### The main goals of our project are to:

- 1** Reduce tick populations on the farms
- 2** Decrease the amount of tick bites and encounters in farmers and farmworkers
- 3** Lessen the probability of contracting tickborne diseases for farmers and farmworkers

When placed on residential properties, Thermacell® Tick Control Tubes have been found to be very effective at decreasing tick populations. Our project aims to test the efficacy of the tick control tubes on agricultural properties, in hopes of providing a simple alternative for farms to decrease tick populations. Because it is impractical to place tubes throughout an entire farm due to the sheer size of these operations, we identified treatment areas that are prone to high rodent activity such as farmhouses and barns with feed. The tube strategy used in the study targets ticks carried by small rodents, which are common reservoirs for tickborne diseases.

Using these tubes is an environmentally safe intervention that kills ticks without the need to spray chemicals. The tubes, which are made of cardboard, are filled with cotton treated with permethrin, a pesticide that is highly effective at killing ticks. Mice and other small rodents take this cotton to use for nesting material, which will kill ticks that are on the mice. Over time – typically 2 years, which is the life cycle of a deer tick – populations will decrease, which will in turn decrease the chances for farmers, farmworkers, and farm animals to encounter ticks and therefore lessen the chances of contracting tickborne diseases.

We are very thankful to the farmers and farmworkers that participated in this study, and appreciate the time they dedicated to our follow-up calls and frequent farm visits!

## OVER THE LAST TWO YEARS, THE VERMONT TICK TUBE PROJECT:

Collected

**49**

ticks



Placed

**3,883**

tubes



Collected

**32**

follow-ups on each farm



Made **9** trips to Southern Vermont



Thermacell Tick Control Tube. Image courtesy Thermacell.



Research Coordinator Destiny Trombley uses a tick drag to find any ticks located around animal enclosures.

IN CASE OF AN  
**EMERGENCY**  
CALL US

In response to the increased likelihood of weather disasters, we established the **Farmers Emergency Fund** in September 2022 to provide financial assistance to New York State farmers experiencing an unexpected, emergency situation. Our Farm Partners program administers the Fund, receiving referrals from other staff, partner organizations, and farmers. Clinical Case Manager Heather Chauncey contacts the farmer in need and presents the situation to an internal committee for expedited review and approval. If approved, farmers can receive up to \$1,000 in one-time assistance, along with case management and referrals to other resources. In its first year, the Fund assisted four farms, followed by six farms in 2023 and seven farms in 2024. The funds have been used in a variety of ways, including covering the cost of feed, building materials, and tree removal services. The Farmers Emergency Fund is made possible by private donors.



High winds blew off the roof a cow barn. Financial assistance from the Farmers Emergency Fund helped purchase new boards, tin, and building materials.





## BRINGING HEALTH SERVICES TO NEW YORK STATE FARMS

Looking for improved ways to serve New York’s agricultural communities and build stronger relationships, we have created an exciting new position: Farm Services Navigator. Christina Day, formerly one of our ag safety educators, has taken on this role, in which she identifies specific needs and connects farmers with resources that will benefit their families, workers, and communities.

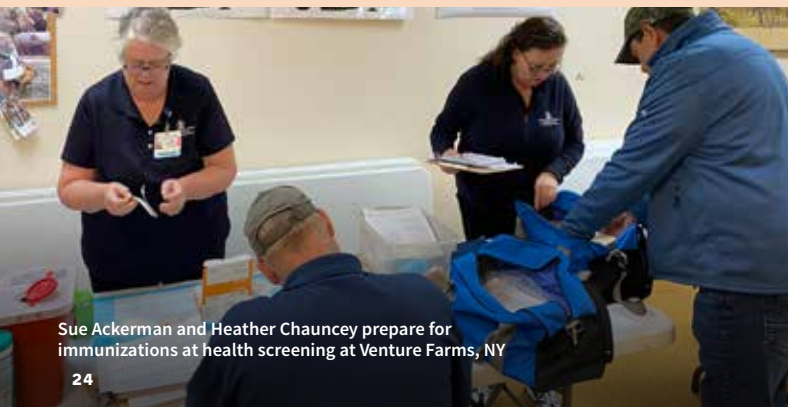
“For too long, we’ve relied on the busiest people in our communities to identify programs and resources that make safety and health, better and easier,” shared Director Julie Sorensen. “With Christina’s assistance, I have no doubt more farmers will be able to take advantage of resources that will benefit their families, workers, and bottom line.”



Christina Day,  
Farm Services Navigator

Access to health services is high on this list. Farmers and farm workers face multiple barriers to obtaining health services, and we are in an enviable position to bring these services to the farm efficiently and effectively.

Through a generous grant from the Community Foundation for South Central New York, we have spent the latter half of 2024 planning the logistics of a pilot project to offer comprehensive on-farm health screenings, with Christina recruiting farms. These screenings will include physicals, dental and eye exams, immunizations, vitals, distribution of educational materials, dental hygiene kits and readers, and any necessary translation services.



Sue Ackerman and Heather Chauncey prepare for immunizations at health screening at Venture Farms, NY

## FLYING AHEAD OF AVIAN INFLUENZA

With H5N1 (avian influenza) spreading across parts of the country in 2024, we ramped up our response for preventing illness, testing, and treating influenza. Prevention activities included teaching biosecurity during on-farm safety trainings, tailoring flu messaging for Amish and Mennonite communities, vaccinating farmworkers against seasonal flu, and providing expert advice in both state and national webinars for the farm community. The NYS Department of Health (DOH) Division of Vaccine Excellence looked to us as experts in delivering on-farm health services, and we supported local county health departments by providing on-farm flu clinics in underserved areas of our state. We were also asked by NYSDOH to be “on-call” for on-farm worker testing for H5N1, should infected herds have been identified. Thankfully, no New York dairies reported infected herds in 2024; however, we remain ready to activate our response protocols should this change in the coming year.



Judy Graham prepares for health screening at Venture Farms, NY



# HEALTHWORKS

## SAFETY AND HEALTH GO HAND IN HAND

HealthWorks Occupational Health Services Program sets us apart from many research entities. With thirty years of experience, our team of specialized health professionals delivers high quality, cost-effective occupational health services directly to the rural workers of Central New York and beyond.

Staffed by those with recognized experience in occupational health, HealthWorks is overseen by a board-certified Occupational and Environmental Health physician, and counts clinicians, nurses, certified technicians, and support personnel among its staff.

The close collaboration between our research, outreach, and clinical staff—working hand in hand under one roof—affords us the ability to offer a wide range of benefits to our customers.

Our researchers train in medical data collection, and research health assessment protocols are informed by the evidence-based practices and procedures developed by our clinical experts in HealthWorks. HealthWorks, in turn, benefits from research-to-practice developments in health and safety, the questioning of the status quo, and incorporation of the latest advancements in occupational health.

This unique partnership helps ensure that we are providing the highest quality services to all of our valued customers.

## HEALTHWORKS BY THE NUMBERS

<b>FIREFIGHTER COMPANIES</b>	<b>91</b>
<b>FIREFIGHTER EXAMS</b>	<b>1,229</b>
<b>DEPT. OF TRANSPORTATION PHYSICALS</b>	<b>165</b>
<b>OTHER PHYSICALS (19A, RESPIRATORY, FIT FOR DUTY)</b>	<b>279</b>

## FIT TESTS

<b>FIREFIGHTER/EMS FIT TESTS</b>	<b>1,269</b>
<b>INDUSTRY FIT TESTS</b>	<b>452</b>
<b>FARM FIT TESTS</b>	<b>325</b>

## DRUG & ALCOHOL TESTING

<b>URINE DRUG COLLECTION</b>	<b>622</b>
<b>BREATH-ALCOHOL TESTS</b>	<b>20</b>

## VACCINES

<b>FLU VACCINES</b>	<b>732</b>
<b>MMR/RABIES/HEP B</b>	<b>71</b>

## MISCELLANEOUS

<b>BLOOD DRAWS (TITERS/HEAVY METALS TESTING, ETC.)</b>	<b>115</b>
<b>AUDIOGRAMS</b>	<b>408</b>
<b>FIREFIGHTER CLEARANCES</b>	<b>1,087</b>



Providers Judy Graham and Craig Lippitt offer free skin cancer screenings at the North American Manure Expo, Auburn, NY

# PUBLICATIONS AND PRESENTATIONS

## PEER JOURNAL PUBLICATIONS (PUBLISHED AND ACCEPTED)

Hammersley C., Richardson N., Meredith D., McNamara J., Carroll P., Jenkins P. On Feirm Ground, supporting farmer mental health: Analysing the effectiveness of a bespoke farmer mental health training programme targeted at farm advisors in Ireland. *Journal of Agricultural Education and Extension*, 2024: 1–29. doi:10.1080/1389224X.2024.2339801

Milkovich P., Roome A., Sorensen J. (2024). IFISH6: Successes and lessons for the future. *J Agromedicine*, 1–3. Accepted October 2024. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1059924X.2024.2413444>

Milkovich P., Roome, A., Orchard D., Sorensen, J. (2024). Making safety an easy catch: PFD use among commercial fishermen in New England. *J Agromedicine*, 1–3. Accepted October 2024

Scott E., Weichelt B., Lincoln J. (2024) Journal of Agromedicine Special Issue on Surveillance. *J Agromedicine*, doi:10.1080/1059924X.2024.2317693

Scott E., Sorensen J. (2024). Examining the Facets of Burden from Agricultural Injury: Policy Implications. *New Solutions: A Journal of Environmental and Occupational Health Policy*. 34(2):83-94. doi:10.1177/10482911241257287

Sorensen J., Jenkins P., Gertz K., Roome A., Weil R., Graham J., Quinn B., Kincl L., Dzugan J., McCue-Weil L. Adding insult to injury: The impact of musculoskeletal pain on fishermen's sleep patterns. *J Agromedicine*. doi:10.1080/1059924X.2025.2451625. Accepted December 2024, Published January 2025, Epub ahead of print. PMID: 39797388.

Sorensen J., Milkovich P., Khorsandi .F, Gorucu S., Weichelt B., Scott E., Johnson A. (2024). Tractors, Trees, and Rollover Protective Structures: A Cause for Concern. *J Agromedicine*. Apr;29(2):162-167. doi: 10.1080/1059924X.2024.2305322. Epub 2024 Jan 19. PMID: 38240313.

## TRADE PUBLICATIONS

Carrabba, J. Update on OSHA Injury and Illness Reporting Requirements. *One Step Ahead*, 2/1/2024.

Carrabba J., Lawrence, J., Workman, K. Crop Season Safety. *Progressive Forage*, 1/1/2024.

Day, C. Sun and Heat Safety Reminders. *One Step Ahead*, 6/10/2024.

Scott E. Northeast Occupational Health and Safety News. *Northern Logger*, 11/1/2024.

Scott E., Zenir M., Lincoln J., Hendricks K. Logging Mechanization and Impacts on Health. NIOSH Science Blog, 12/3/2024

Welsh, S. Biosecurity for Avian Influenza. *One Step Ahead*, 9/9/2024.

## ORAL PRESENTATIONS

Capel M., McCue C., Meek H., Scott E., Frye E., Bennett J., Telgen C., Lynch R., Damaj, O. How the National Milk Testing Strategy impacts NYS dairy farmers. PRO-DAIRY, NEDPA, and NYFB webinar. Virtual, 12/19/2024.

Hansen Ruiz C.S., Gould E. Informing agricultural injury prevention strategies using a tailored surveillance approach. Third Annual Injury Prevention Symposium at UVM. Burlington, VT, 11/9/2024.

Hansen Ruiz C.S., Huber J., Scott E., Luschen K. Understanding dissemination preferences of an injury surveillance system in agriculture, forestry, and fishing. APHA Annual Meeting. Minneapolis, MN, 10/28/2024.

Hirabayashi L., Gould E., Lane II T. Timber Talks health and safety: Findings from the Maine Health and Safety Study and introduction to the Research to Practice Incubator. Acadia Insurance Annual Meetings. Lincoln, ME, 7/11/2024, and Presque Isle, ME, 7/12/2024.

Hirabayashi L., Milkovich P., McCue-Weil L., Sorensen J. Pathway to innovation in occupational health and safety: Creating the Northeast Center Research to Practice Incubator. IFISH6 Conference. Rome, Italy, 1/6/2024.

Lynch R., Nelson J., Capel M., Sorensen J., Scott E., McCue C. Dairy Cattle H5N1 (HPAI) Update. PRO-DAIRY, NEDPA, and NYFB webinar. Virtual, 7/10/2024.

McCue-Weil L., Hirabayashi L., Milkovich P., Sorensen J. Pathway to innovation in occupational health and safety: Creating the Northeast Center Research to Practice Incubator. NIOSH Center Directors Group. Virtual, 7/16/2024.

McNary J., Gibbins J., Scott E., Schenk, K. Panel Discussion: Focusing the OHS lens on Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI) - Perspectives from the field. CSTE Occupational Health Surveillance Subcommittee Winter Meeting. Cincinnati, OH, 12/5/2024.

Milkovich P. Understanding regional partners' engagement in implementation activities using the Managing Complex Change Framework. Annual Conference on the Science of Dissemination and Implementation in Health. Arlington, VA, 12/9/2024.

Roome A. 2024. Keep that mind of yours running on the flat ass calm: Mental health in commercial fisheries. Bassett Medical Center Research Grand Rounds. Virtual, 5/7/2024.

Roome A. Sleep and stress at sea (and solutions!). Pacific Marine Expo, Seattle, WA, 11/20/2024.

Roome A., Coombs M. 2024. Keep that mind of yours running on the flat ass calm: Mental health in commercial fisheries. AgriStress Mental Health Innovations Exchange. Virtual, 6/5/2024.

Roome A., Sorensen J. Mental health in commercial fisheries. Virtual, 8/14/2024.

Roome A., Sorensen J., Coombs M., Gertz K., Huber J. Lines of support: Tackling stress at sea. IFISH6 Conference. Rome, Italy, 1/9/2024.

Scott E. Bluestone cutters silicosis. Northeast Occupational Health Surveillance Network Meeting. Chester, CT, 5/20/2024.

Scott E. Bluestone cutters silicosis. NYS Occupational Health Clinic Network Quarterly Meeting. Virtual, 6/20/2024.

Scott E. Challenges in addressing injury and chronic health issues among logging workers. Council on Forest Engineering Conference (COFE). Moscow, ID, 5/23/2024.

Scott E. Expanding our view of occupational health and safety. Bassett Medical Center Research Grand Rounds. Virtual, 4/2/2024.

Scott E. Health and safety considerations for loggers in the NE United States. West Virginia University Safety and Health Extension, Tethered/Winch Assist Steep Slope Logging Demonstration and Training. Bruceton Mills, WV, 3/11/2024.

Scott E. Logging industry stresses and impacts on health: A Northeast US perspective. AgriSafe. Virtual, 7/3/2024.

Scott E. Occupational hazards in Pennsylvania farming and forestry. Council of State and Territorial Epidemiologists (CSTE) Annual Meeting, Occupational Health Surveillance Workshop. Pittsburgh, PA, 6/9/2024.

Scott E., Gibson A.M. Bluestone cutter silicosis. NYS Occupational Health Clinic Network Quarterly Meeting. Virtual, 6/20/2024.

Scott E., Hansen Ruiz C.S., Hirabayashi L., Graham J., Krupa N., Jenkins P. Work-related injury and chronic health issues among logging workers in the Northeast United States. International Union of Forest Research Organizations (IUFRO) 26th World Congress. T2.30 Sustainable Forest Operations (SFO): Challenges and Opportunities Towards a Resilient Wood Supply Chain and Worker Wellbeing. Stockholm, Sweden, 6/28/2024.

Sorensen J. From cows to codfish: Health and safety adventures in America's most dangerous industries. George Mason University, 2/16/2024.

Sorensen J. IFISH Conferences and the IFISH Innovation Exchange. First International Symposium on the Oil Spill Disaster off the Coast of Brazil in 2019: Research, Risk Management, Developed Actions, and Citizen Science. Virtual, 11/5/2024.

Sorensen J. The IFISH Innovation Exchange. FISH Platform Meeting, Capetown, South Africa, 11/20/2024.

Sorensen J. NEC-Lifejackets for Lobstermen. 6th Grade Science Students, Austin, TX, Virtual, 10/10/2024.

Sorensen J., Becot F. Are we lost? What is the role of the occupational health and safety researcher in tumultuous times? ISASH Annual Meeting. Portland, OR, 6/19/2024.

Sorensen J., Kincl L., Roome A. Sleep deprivation and associated health and cognitive impacts in commercial fishermen. IFISH6 Conference. Rome, Italy, 1/9/2024.

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Cristina Silvia Hansen Ruiz and Kim Gertz at Bassett Research Day, Cooperstown, NY



One Atwell Road, Cooperstown, NY 13326

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### **ACKNOWLEDGMENTS**

This publication is supported by the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), New York State Department of Health, New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets, and New York State Department of Labor/Hazard Abatement Board as part of a financial assistance award totaling \$5,523,482 with 55 percent (\$3,088,637) funded by CDC/HHS and 45 percent (\$2,434,845) funded by non-federal sources. The contents are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily represent the official views of, nor an endorsement, by CDC/HHS, or the U.S. Government, or NYS.