



Communication Services
5334 S. Prince St
Littleton, CO 80166
Phone: 303-795-4284
Fax: 303-738-7894
www.co.arapahoe.co.us

For release: Jan. 17, 2008

Contact:

ROBERT FETSCH
Family Life Specialist
Colorado State University
Direct: 970-491-5648
E-mail: fetsch@cahs.colostate.edu

or

NICHOLE PARMELLY
Communication Services Specialist
Direct: 303-636-1945
Mobile: 303-710-7893
E-mail: nparmelly@co.arapahoe.co.us

Disabled Colorado ranchers learn ways to stay in business

Arapahoe County hosts AgrAbility Workshop Feb. 8 to support disabled farmers

Aurora, Colo. --- Arapahoe County's CSU Extension will host a free AgrAbility Workshop for disabled farmers Feb. 8 at the Arapahoe County Fairgrounds, 25690 E. Quincy Ave., Aurora.

The morning workshop, *Got Knee/Hip/Joint Problems on the Ranch/Farm?*, caters to ranchers and farmers experiencing pain such as arthritis, back and joint pain, hearing loss, heart or breathing problems that affect their ability to maintain their career. It runs 9 a.m. – noon and includes lunch for those who register by Feb. 1. The workshop will show ranchers easy ways to protect their joints while working on the farm, what to look for when purchasing new equipment and tools, as well as ways to modify current equipment to prevent further injuries.

The afternoon workshop, from 1 – 4 p.m., is for occupational therapists, physicians, chiropractors, home healthcare providers and others who work with disabled ranchers and will provide them with tips on how they can expand their client support through AgrAbility joint protection techniques and equipment/tool modifications.

Wellington rancher Bill Way found the workshop to be incredibly valuable. After 30 years of ranching and the recent onset of Parkinson's disease and back pain, he had trouble working his ranch and he thought he'd have to give it up. Through the AgrAbility Workshop he was put in contact with Jason Beck, AgrAbility Project Coordinator for Easter Seals Colorado.

"Because of the pain Way was in, he was having trouble getting on and off his tractor and in danger of falling off," said Beck. "We were able to modify his tractor so that he could get on and off more easily."

Eligible farmers and ranchers may receive on-site evaluations and, if applicable, receive equipment modification or assistive technology to help maintain their ability to work their farm and make a living.

Registrations received by Feb. 1 will include a free lunch. Call Bob Fetsch at 970-491-5648 or send an e-mail to fetsch@cahs.colostate.edu to reserve a seat. If fewer than five people pre-register, the workshop may be canceled.

The USDA's Cooperative State Research, Education and Extension Service funds the Colorado AgrAbility Project, a CSU Extension Program, which aims to keep farmers and ranchers healthy and able to continue their agricultural operations.

* * *