

## California AgrAbility Project

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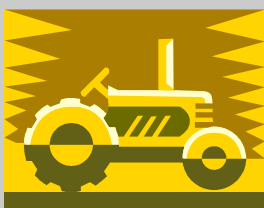
*A partnership between the  
University of California Farm  
Safety Program (Cooperative  
Extension) and Easter Seals  
Superior California.*

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## *Promoting Success in Agriculture for People with Disabilities and Their Families*

### Social Capital: You Can Bank On It!

*Social Capital?* Most of us think of *capital* as money invested to make more money. In the non-financial world *capital* is an *advantage* or *resource* used in a particular situation to enhance activities and outcomes. For CalAgrAbility *social capital* is people ...community...and the accumulation of their personal experiences, knowledge and their good will (Cernea 1994, 9). CalAgrAbility has reaped many returns on these investments.

Since 2002 CalAgrAbility has served more than 120 consumer farmers and workers, who live and labor despite disabling conditions and illness. The goal is to help these California farm folk to continue working safely and independently. Providing direct service to agricultural workers (farmers and employees) at home and on farms requires considerable community building. Community and capacity building is especially challenging when working with California's diverse multicultural and multilingual farm populations.

CalAgrAbility does not work alone! Across nearly 160,000 square miles, reaching out to some 88,000 farm families and nearly one million Latino workers requires large investments in rural

communities' social capital. Interacting with communities to foster capacity building and taking a participatory approach keeps us on track in fulfilling project, as well as individual consumer, goals. Success requires more than linking individuals to agencies; it requires building relationships among people. Before the real work begins, foundations are laid to engage community resources. Key to community and capacity building is enabling individuals to take an active role in program outreach.

We count on the social capital of communities, especially local supporters, i.e., the neighbor down the road, the school teacher, the guy at the farmers market, the women's group at the church.

CalAgrAbility's social capital bank account involves close collaboration with state, federal and local agencies and businesses. Social networks are formed, which eases navigation within rural areas and multicultural communities.

Drawing on social capital takes the form of volunteers working alongside each other, staff interacting with consumers, or community members promoting project activities in their own backyards.

It all comes down to people supporting a program that they believe in.

**Events****Upcoming Events**

May 6-7, 2006

**Arthritis Foundation Self-Help Program in English**  
Reno, NV

May 17-19, 2006

**NHRA Multi-Cultural Health Conference**  
Reno, NV<http://www.nrharural.org/conferences/sub/AnnConf.html>

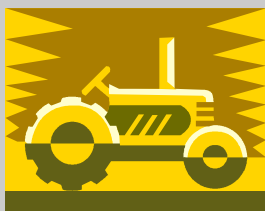
May 20-24, 2006

**National Farm Worker Health Conference**  
San Antonio, TX[www.nachc.com/ela/files/Farworkerqlance.pdf](http://www.nachc.com/ela/files/Farworkerqlance.pdf)

June 9-10, 2006

**Arthritis Foundation Self-Help Program in Spanish**  
Sacramento, CA

June 22-26, 2006

**RESNA 2006: Thriving in Challenging Times**Hyatt Regency Atlanta, GA  
<http://www.resna.org/RESNA%202006%20Preliminary%20Program.pdf>

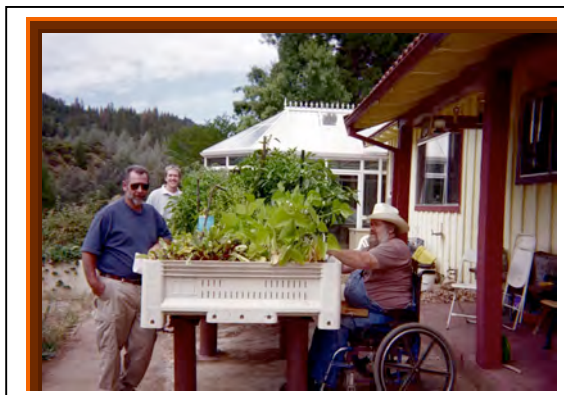
We're on the Web!

<http://calagrability.ucdavis.edu/>**Volunteers**

What comes to mind when you think of the word “volunteer”? Do you think of a helper? Does it remind you of nice People? Or unpaid people? Maybe activists or humanitarians? These are merely a few examples of the wide array of definitions that apply to the word “volunteer.” Volunteers are individuals who reach out and contribute time not for profit, but for the cause and benefit of others. And they are a valuable source of social capital. Volunteerism is not donating money; it is the giving of one’s time and talents.

According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, 30% of people aged 16 and over in the United States (more than 65 million) volunteered between September 2004 and September 2005. Those who volunteered averaged an annual total of about 50 volunteer hours. Why do so many people choose to volunteer? We didn’t have to look very far to find some answers.

In California AgrAbility staff have come across many wonderful and enthusiastic people that give their time and efforts in volunteering for individuals with disabilities or those that work in agriculture. We interviewed these dynamic people and asked them why they volunteer and why they are active in agriculture.



*Figure No 1: Some CalAgrAbility consumers have strong support systems. Marshall’s team, Jeff and Gregg provide engineering, plant science, and organic growing expertise to Marshall’s successful farm enterprise, Herb Blossom Express.*

Marshall is located in Northern CA. Email him at [herbguy@herb-blossom.com](mailto:herbguy@herb-blossom.com) about demonstration farms for the disabled.



*Figure No 2: Many gather at multi-cultural events. Local volunteers assist CalAgrAbility disseminate information and staff demonstration booths*

## More Events

August 7-9, 2006

### **The Future of Agriculture: Science, Stewardship, and Sustainability**

Hyatt Regency  
Sacramento, CA

<http://www.dce.ksu.edu/dce/conf/ag&environment/>

September 20-22, 2006

### **Health and Safety in Western Agriculture: Research to Practice**

Asilomar, CA

<http://agcenter.ucdavis.edu/Announce/R2P2006.php>

November 3-5, 2006

### **Northern California Abilities Expo**

Santa Clara Convention Center

<http://noc.abilitiesexpo.com/iaenoc/v42/index.cvn>



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## Kelly Landis

Kelly Landis is not new to agriculture, advocacy and volunteerism. He spent his teenage years on a farm in Iowa along the Mississippi river. As a student at Cal Poly and USC, he was involved in the politics and advocacy surrounding issues in the student community. In 1990, as a student at Cal Poly, Kelly was diagnosed with a serious illness and doctors gave him only ten years to live. Because of this news, he decided to give up his dream of farming and discontinued his Fruit Science studies at Cal Poly.

Now, over a decade has passed since Kelly was given his grave prognosis. He realized that he was still alive and decided to get back into his first love: agriculture. He found that farming helped his illness: the fresh air, work, clean water and food. Most importantly he states that farming helped him deal with his illness on a mental level. When asked of his desire to cultivate he replied that he is drawn to green open spaces, fresh air, hard work and the reward of seeing your product in it's finished form and being involved in the process from start to finish. As many in farming feel, this is the only way of life that he wants, disability or not.

As Kelly returned to his dreams he found that being disabled and trying to break into farming were not as easy as he had thought. Many programs and grants were set up for farmers with experience and land. So far he has not found many programs

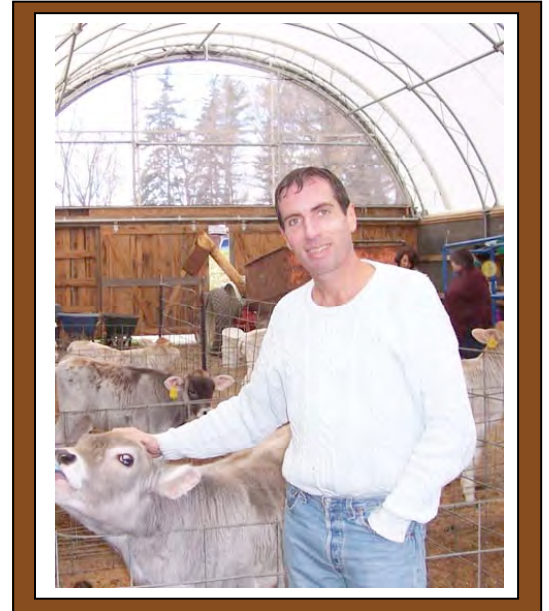


Figure No 3: Kelly Landis at National AgrAbility Workshop, Vermont. Photo courtesy Mary Reyna

for internships, which he believes are needed. Utilizing his advocacy spirit, he has come up with several ideas for non-profit development, fundraising, and agro tourism. He is interested in finding others in agriculture that would like to collaborate and mentor, teach and share their knowledge with those who have disabilities.

Landis is also involved in organic farming because it combines his interest in non-profit work and activism. He is a community activist that is involved in getting the community aware of the farmers market and buying organic. Organic farming also aligns with his health philosophy, which is centered on the holistic and non-toxic way of life.

**Volunteer Links**

California Service Corps

<http://www.csc.ca.gov/service/field.asp>

American Red Cross

<http://www.redcross.org/>

Volunteer Centers of California

<http://www.volunteercntersca.org/>

California AgrAbility Project

<http://calagrability.ucdavis.edu/>

Volunteer Match

<http://www.volunteermatch.org/>



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**Advocacy**

Political advocacy is needed to discover creative solutions to enable persons with disabilities to continue farming or enter farming. Advocates for the disabled initiate programs, funding, and help protect the rights of those with disabilities.

**Reaching out**

You can reach out to volunteer. You can contact CalAgrAbility; we are always looking for people to help us in our outreach all over California. There are a number of ways you can assist us. You can provide internships/mentor on your farm to those with disabilities.

**Mentoring or Internship**

Mentoring or Internship opportunities can provide a hands-on experience in which people can work hand in hand with someone who may or may not have a disability. They can experience first hand how farming solutions can be achieved for someone with a disability.

**Donations/Free Tabling**

It can be a challenge running a nonprofit project on a fixed budget. Many fairs, events, and workshops charge registration fees that can run over a thousand dollars. As far as discounts or even free registration goes, it never hurts to ask. In many cases, we have been granted booth spaces at fairs completely free of charge. The Stockton Ag Expo and the Binational Health Fair are two events that waive registration fees in California for AgrAbility. This is essentially an act of volunteering. Rather than volunteering time or manpower, they are volunteering their space and their network to our program free of charge.

**Agro tourism**

One of Kelly Landis's ideas, agro tourism, is tourism that attracts visitors to farm operations. One of Kelly Landis's ideas that incorporates the concept of agro tourism is having farmers that have disabilities give other farmers or interested people tours of how their farms are operated and how they manage their disabilities and farming. These tours could also lead to mentoring or internship opportunities for all involved as well as funding and revenue opportunities.

Clipart:  
<http://www.hamiltontn.gov/SCD/clipart/farmto1.gif>

UCD

**Resources**

BLS: Volunteering in the United States, 2005.  
<http://www.bls.gov/opub/mlr/2006/02/ressum.pdf>

Boris, Elizabeth T. 1999. "The Nonprofit Sector in the 1990s." In *Philanthropy and the Nonprofit Sector*, edited by Charles T. Clotfelter and Thomas Ehrlich. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

O'Connell, Brian. 1999. *Civil Society: The Underpinnings of American Democracy*. Hanover, N.H.: University Press of New England.

Putnam, Robert D. 1993. *Making Democracy Work: Civic Traditions in Modern Italy*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press. Building Nonprofit Capacity A Framework for Addressing the Problem

*Carol J. De Vita*, SENIOR RESEARCH ASSOCIATE  
*Cory Fleming*, CENTER ADMINISTRATOR

*Eric C. Twombly*, RESEARCH ASSOCIATE  
CENTER ON NONPROFITS AND PHILANTHROPY, THE URBAN INSTITUTE

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**Nelly Trejo**

Nelly Trejo worked for CalAgrAbility in 2003. While working for the project, she handled case management, did outreach at health fairs and made home visits to consumers. She was able to reach many people during her employment at CalAgrAbility and continues to do so as a volunteer. She is a full time student at California State University Sacramento and works in special education at a local high school. After completing her B.A., Nelly is now completing her teaching credential in Special Education. She also works for Mercy Hospital in passenger safety installing car seats and volunteers her time translating at car seat safety inspections in the area.

Her interest in injury prevention in farming and in the community comes from her family history of farm work and from helping to take care of her brother who has a profound disability. Her experiences with CalAgrAbility have impacted her greatly and inspired her to want to do more for the farm working community. She continues to volunteer for CalAgrAbility by working with our consumers. She also is a guest presenter for migrant farm working students at events throughout the region, and attended the 2005 National AgrAbility workshop in Burlington, VT.



Figure No 4: Volunteer Nelly Trejo at an agricultural fair

**About CalAgrAbility ...**

The California AgrAbility Project's primary goal is to help farmers, agricultural workers, ranchers and their families to continue working in agriculture regardless of physical limitations, impairments and disabilities. Staff will help conduct on-site assessments and identify appropriate assistive technologies to make the job safer and easier. This is supported by the CSREES USDA under special project number 2003-41490-01584.

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