

Ability Solutions for Agricultural Communities

Caring for loved ones: Are you a caregiver?

What is a caregiver?

Each year millions of us care for a friend or family member who needs special help taking care of themselves. We help with everything from transportation and house chores, to making healthcare and end-of-life decisions. We do these things in addition to the various responsibilities on the farm, such as caring for livestock, tending to crops, and operating farming machinery. Although we take on a wide range of responsibilities, we rarely know that we are caregivers. We simply think of ourselves as sons and daughters, parents, spouses, grandchildren, and friends. Recognizing that we are caregivers is the first step in identifying support and services available to us. This is especially important for those of us who work on a farm, ranch or any agricultural production related job.



PC: www.HCN.org

How do I know if I am a caregiver?

Caregiving looks different for every family. The U.S. Library of Medicine, defines a caregiver as a person who provides care for “someone who needs help taking care of themselves.”¹ Perhaps your loved one needs help because of an injury, a disability, or an illness. While this definition sounds simple enough, you might still be wondering if you are your loved one’s caregiver. California AgrAbility can help!

How can California AgrAbility help?

California AgrAbility understands that carrying the responsibilities of working on the farm combined with caregiving is a challenge. They can help you identify if you are a caregiver and begin finding and connecting you to other resources so you get the services you need to support yourself and your family. Agencies and organizations staff commonly discusses with farming families for caregiver support include:

Churches—Have strong ties to the community and support the practical, spiritual, and emotional needs of family caregivers and their loved ones.

Community Health Clinics—Provide guidance and assistance finding local and state programs that provide in-home healthcare and financial assistance for caregivers and their loved ones.

Area Agencies on Aging—Coordinate a variety of services throughout California for older adults, adults with disabilities, and family caregivers.

1. <https://www.agingcare.com/articles/a-caregivers-role-185235.htm>

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Ability Tools connects Californians with disabilities to assistive technology devices, tools and services to make life easier.

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Where can I start to look for resources to support me in my caregiver role?

It is easy to overlook your own needs when you are focused on the tasks that await you each morning on the farm and caring for a loved one. You may be reluctant to ask for help because you do not see yourself as a caregiver, but remember that you *are* a caregiver and it is okay to ask for help to take care of yourself. Taking care of yourself mentally and physically not only improves your health and wellbeing, but also helps you be a more productive and patient caregiver. There are various agencies and organizations available to caregivers throughout California that provide resources to help you balance your roles as farm worker and caregiver.

Family Caregiver Alliance

<https://www.caregiver.org/>

(800) 445-8106

The Family Caregiver Alliance provides services to family caregivers of adults with physical and cognitive impairments. Their services include assessment, care planning, direct care skills, wellness programs, respite services, and legal/financial consultation vouchers. FCA is a longtime advocate for caregivers in the areas of policy, health and social system development, research, and public awareness, on the state, national and international levels.



California Caregiver Resource Centers

<https://www.caregivercalifornia.org/>

(800) 635-0220

The California Caregiver Resource Centers are a network of 11 centers throughout California which serve family caregivers who are providing support for someone affected by chronic and debilitating health conditions. California Caregiver Resource Centers serve thousands of families and caregivers across income categories.



U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs Program of General Caregiver Services

https://www.caregiver.va.gov/Care_Caregivers.asp

(855) 260-3274

The U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs' Program of General Caregiver Support Services (PGCSS) supports informal caregivers through the provision of resources, education and support to caregivers of Veterans. The Veteran does not need to have a service-connected condition, for which the caregiver is needed, and may have served during any era. No formal application is required.



Alta Regional Center

<https://www.altaregional.org/>

(916) 978-6400

Alta Regional Center is one of 21 Regional Centers in the state of California that assist parents of infant, children, or adults with developmental disabilities navigate their way through regional center community services and vendors. Alta Regional Center provides assistance with assessment and diagnosis, family support, advocacy for legal protection for individuals and their families.



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nifa.usda.gov/program/agrability

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CalAgrAbility serves farm and ranch families affected by disability and illness protecting the quality of life and preserving livelihoods.

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