

Cultivate

Newsletter of the National Farm Medicine Center

Summer 2013

Our Mission

"To conduct high quality research addressing human health and safety associated with rural and agricultural work, life and environments."

Save the Date

The National Farm Medicine Center's annual gala fundraiser, the Auction of Champions, is scheduled for Thursday, September 19, 2013 at RiverEdge Golf Course in Marshfield. Nearly \$2.8 million has been raised for agricultural safety and health since the first Auction in 1982.

Auction Chair Erik Stratman, M.D., is pleased to announce this year's theme, "Monopoly," based on the board game. Proceeds from last year's event were applied to a number of areas, including establishment of a new program to provide funding to farm families to install lifesaving Rollover Protective Structures (ROPS) on older tractors.

Study asks: how does farm life produce stronger immunity?

A new study is looking at how the dirtier side of farm life may be the real reason why kids who grow up in agricultural environments are far less likely to develop allergic diseases than city counterparts.

Funded by a five-year, \$5 million grant from the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID), researchers at the National Farm Medicine Center have teamed with the University of Wisconsin School of Medicine and Public Health to determine how childhood exposures unique to farm environments promotes the kind of immunologic development that limits the severity of childhood allergic diseases and asthma.

"If we figure out the active protective ingredient on the farm, we would want to give it to everybody," said Dr. Matthew Keifer, director of the National Farm Medicine Center and a co-investigator on the study.

The study is enrolling 200 babies from the Marshfield area – half of whom will be from farm families and the other half from rural families who do not live on farms. For two years, researchers will track the children's exposure to farm animals and farm-related microbes while measuring the development of cells involved in antiviral responses and tolerance.

"There have been great advancements made in the treatment of asthma, but very little progress made in preventing the illness in the first place," said Dr. James Gern, principal investigator



Families such as the Klumbs, of Marshfield, benefit from a microbe-rich farm environment.

for the University of Wisconsin. "We hope that our study will eventually lead to the development of new preventive strategies."

For more information, call the study hotline at 1-888-512-5488.



Marshfield Clinic[®]
Research Foundation

Cultivate Safety campaign



Josh Meissner knows all too well how important it is to make safety a priority on farms.

The 37-year-old is a lifelong Wisconsin dairy farmer who lost part of two fingers on his right hand while working on a harvester. The injury serves as a constant reminder to him and all workers on Norm-E-Lane Farm, which has a track record for keeping workers safe. Meissner's experience, coupled with a deep desire to protect his own children, led him to join Cultivate Safety, a public-health campaign from The National Children's Center for Rural and Agricultural Health and Safety. Cultivate Safety gives parents the resources and information they need to keep children safe on farms.

"The campaign's message, 'Parent first, farmer second,' puts things in perspective," said Meissner, of Chili, Wis., who is featured in one of the campaign's ads. "No matter how important the farm is to our way of life, it's never worth the life of a child."

The campaign leads farmers to a new website, cultivatesafety.org, which provides one-stop shopping for tips on how to keep children safe while they work and play on farms.

The website includes easy-to-use information about child development and best-practice work guidelines. An interactive feature allows users to upload stories, videos and photos about child injury events and prevention strategies so that farm families can learn from one another.

Rollover Protective Structure (ROPS) rebate program

The Farm Center kicked off its Rollover Protective Structure (ROPS) Rebate Program by enrolling 110 farmers and drawing for two free installed ROPS during the Marshfield Farm Show in February. Wilmer Landwehr, Stratford, became the first farmer to complete his retrofit when Central Wisconsin Cooperative in Stratford installed a Hercules rigid ROPS system for his 1965 John Deere 2010. This will be the first of three tractors on Landwehr's farm to be retrofitted. The other drawing winner was Jim Beaver, Loyal, who won a Laurin rigid ROPS system for his 1977 Ford 7700. Cherokee Garage in Colby will be installing the new system, the first of five tractors in Beaver's fleet to have a roll bar. Enrollment continues. The program will rebate 70 percent of the cost of purchasing and installing the ROPS up to a total of \$865. Call 1-877-767-7748 or visit www.roprs4u.com.

Farm MAPPER

Farm Mapping to Assist, Protect and Prepare Emergency Responders (Farm MAPPER) – a project that uses QR codes to provide emergency responders onsite information about hazards and physical layouts of agricultural operations – is now online. Farmers can use the interactive Web tool to map their farms. The Pittsville Fire Department is the only department currently able to read Farm MAPPER codes, but any farmer can open an account in Farm MAPPER and populate an aerial photo of their property with icons indicating locations of hazards. Instructions for using Farm MAPPER are at www.nfmcfarmmapper.com.

UMASH Center



Communications Specialist Scott Heiberger received a pilot grant from the Upper Midwest Agricultural Safety and Health Center (UMASH) to pursue improved media coverage of safety and health. Heiberger is teaming with staff at the Agricultural Communications Documentation Center (ACDC) at the University of Illinois, which features the largest collection of literature (38,000 documents) about communications in agriculture.

ASHCA

Barbara Lee, Ph.D., and the Farm Center are facilitating the 2013 North American Agricultural Safety Summit, Sept. 25 – 27, in Minneapolis. The event is designed to bring together agricultural industry leaders and safety experts to address the hazards that put agriculture's injury rate at eight times the all-industry average. It is being hosted by the Agricultural Safety and Health Council of America (ASHCA) www.ashca.com. CHS Inc. President Carl Casale, and NIOSH Director Dr. John Howard are among confirmed speakers, as well as directors of major farm organizations such as Dairy Farmers of America and Florida Fruit and Vegetable Association. U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Tom Vilsack has been invited.



Furthermore...

The Farm Center welcomes **Jason Flyte**, Web developer associate, **Scott Sandberg, M.P.H.**, research specialist, and **Teresa Schnetzer**, Agricultural Safety Consulting intern. ... Farm Center staff have finished editing a special issue of the Journal of Agromedicine which examines safety and health in the dairy industry worldwide. The issue will be published in July. ... The Farm Center hosted the AgrAbility of Wisconsin Summit, May 16, at Marshfield Clinic Research Foundation, with the assistance of five young people from Marshfield Clinic AmeriCorps. AgrAbility of Wisconsin promotes success in agriculture for farmers with disabilities. Approximately 50 farmers attended. Farm Center Director Matthew Keifer, M.D., M.P.H., was among the speakers.

