

Cultivate

SUMMER/FALL 2026

NEWSLETTER OF THE NATIONAL FARM MEDICINE CENTER

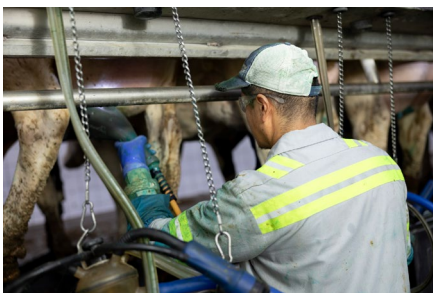
PremisesMapper streamlines biosecurity planning and disease outbreak readiness

National Farm Medicine staff led the development of PremisesMapper (rfdash.org/PremisesMapper), a free, online biosecurity mapping tool. This tool will help producers boost readiness and maintain business during disease outbreaks.

Biosecurity measures and practices are designed to keep infectious diseases and disease-causing organisms, including viruses, bacteria, fungi and parasites, away from animals, property and people. A “premises map” provides an aerial view of a property, including its boundaries, structures and key features like access points, cleaning and disinfecting stations and other features relevant to facility biosecurity.

Creating a biosecurity plan and premises map prior to a disease outbreak can speed up response efforts and limit negative impacts on operations. Many livestock producers are required to submit a premises map to their state animal health office as a part of their biosecurity plan. The Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection Division of Animal Health served as a key stakeholder and advisor in the tool development process.

“This tool facilitates development of maps for producers and streamlines the transfer of maps to state officials and emergency response personnel,” said Jakob Hanschu, PremisesMapper product manager.



Farm Medicine leads Clinic participation at Wisconsin Farm Technology Days



For two amazing days in July, Marshfield Clinic Farm Rescue, Education, Safety and Health (FRESH) combined clinical medicine and research under one big tent at Wisconsin Farm Technology Days in Stratford, providing medical screenings and health education.

The National Farm Medicine Center led coordination of FRESH in collaboration with the National Children's Center for Rural and Agricultural Health and Safety, Pittsville Fire Department and Marshfield Clinic. Marshfield Clinic was a platinum sponsor contributing \$25,000.

The event is Wisconsin's largest outdoor agricultural show highlighting farming technology, equipment and education, and was held at Redetzke's No Joke Dairy farm. Wisconsin Gov. Tony Evers visited the FRESH area on the first day of the event.

More than 60 Marshfield Clinic staff connected with the community through 20 exhibition booths, a skin cancer screening station, a mobile mammography education unit and a children's play area. Other exhibitors included Progressive Agriculture Foundation, Wisconsin AgrAbility and Wisconsin Agricultural Tourism Association, as well as WAXX-FM 104.5 from Eau Claire.

Improving access to healthcare

During the event, Farm Medicine and Marshfield Clinic supported community health and safety through the following services and demonstrations:

- 400 skin cancer screenings
- 200 blood pressure screenings
- Farm rescue and safety demonstrations, including the landing of a Life Link III helicopter

“We were excited to bring health screening and education to farmers and their families,” said Melissa Ploeckelman Brown, Farm Medicine outreach specialist. “By offering these screenings in a setting that is already part of farmers' routines, we can remove barriers and make it easier for individuals to take that first step in preventive care.”

Making an impact at world agricultural safety conference

Ten scientists and staff from the National Farm Medicine Center and National Children's Center joined nearly 400 attendees at the Safety & Health in Agricultural & Rural Populations (SHARP) conference in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, Canada in June.

The team, all members of the International Society for Agricultural Safety and Health (ISASH), presented on multiple projects and played active roles on numerous ISASH committees.

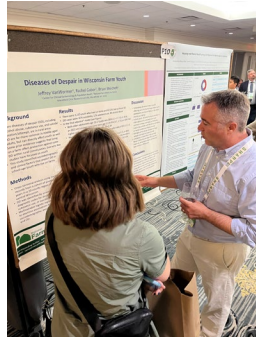
Casper Bendixsen, PhD, participated in the opening keynote panel, "Farm safety is good for business."

Melissa Ploeckelman Brown, ISASH board member, was announced as ISASH president-elect.

Josie Rudolphi, PhD, National Children's Center project leader, took office as president for the coming year.

Farzaneh Khorsandi, PhD, National Children's Center project leader, was honored with the ISASH Research Achievement Award.

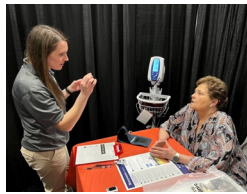
Jeff VanWormer, Journal of Agromedicine editor-in-chief, hosted a meeting of journal associate editors in Saskatoon. The journal will publish a special issue containing papers from the conference in April 2027.



Helping farmers be healthy at PDP Business Conference

National Farm Medicine Center supported the health and safety of farm families at the 2026 Professional Dairy Producers Business Conference, held in March at the Alliant Energy Center in Madison.

Alyssa Peterson, RN, and Barbie Gildenzopf, RN, provided blood pressure checks throughout the conference, answered questions and offered practical advice. In addition, Melissa Ploeckelman Brown led a session on understanding blood pressure, why it matters and simple steps farmers can take to protect their long-term health.



National Action Plan now available in Spanish

The National Children's Center published a Spanish version of "Safeguarding Children in Agriculture: A National Action Plan," an updated framework for safeguarding youth in agricultural and rural environments. Migrant Clinicians Network is leading Spanish dissemination efforts. The plan reflects changes in agriculture while building on previous plans published in 1996, 2001 and 2012.

To view the English and Spanish versions online, and to access bilingual social media kits, go to marshfieldresearch.org/nccrahs/nap/2025. To request a hard copy, contact Cassey Peltier, cassandra.peltier@sanfordhealth.org.

Telling the Story Project: Taylor's Story

Young people eagerly anticipate the end of each school year, and Taylor VanderWeele, 14, was no different. He had recently passed a tractor safety course and began working for two neighboring farmers. Just weeks after his eighth-grade graduation, Taylor died in a tractor rollover. Cindy and Jay VanderWeele are sharing their son's story to advocate for renewed and expanded investment in agricultural injury prevention.



The Telling the Story Project (tellingthestoryproject.org/taylor/series) recounts the VanderWeele family's experience.

RF-DASH trains firefighters, farm leaders in North Dakota and Florida

At the end of February, the Rural Firefighters Delivering Agricultural Safety and Health (RF-DASH) program trained 55 firefighters at the North Dakota Fire School in Minot. They trained more than 20 farm managers, extension agents and firefighters at the University of Florida Gulf Coast Research and Education Center in Wimauma.

Future RF-DASH training will be held in Montana, Minnesota, Tennessee and New York. The RF-DASH Team is grateful for support from the CHS Foundation, the Upper Midwest Agricultural Safety and Health Center and regional sponsors and collaborators who continue to advance RF-DASH across the country.

Aging farmers, roadway collisions top concerns in Wisconsin farm fatalities reports

The National Farm Medicine Center, Marshfield Clinic Research Institute, the University of Wisconsin-Madison Division of Extension and UW's College of Agricultural and Life Sciences recently published farm fatalities reports (marshfieldresearch.org/nfmc/wi-farm-related-fatality-reports) for the years 2021, 2022 and 2023. The reports indicate that injuries and deaths remain a persistent issue, with an average of more than 30 fatalities per year. The reports were co-authored by Bryan Weichert and Roger Aby, both scientists with the National Farm Medicine Center, and John Shutske, University of Wisconsin-Madison Professor.

The reports raise specific concerns related to aging farmers, roadway collisions, ATVs/UTVs and suicide.

"We continue to see older individuals (65 or older), particularly men, at high risk," Shutske said. "Going back to 2017, in most years, individuals 65 or older made up around 50 percent of all of the fatalities recorded each year. In these recent three years, individuals over age 65 constituted 46 percent of fatalities in 2021, 55 percent in 2022, and 50 percent in 2023."

Furthermore

Cap Bendixsen, PhD, National Farm Medicine Center director, joined Jamey Stueber, Marshfield Clinic Eau Claire Center manager, at the Chippewa Falls Chamber's Farmer Appreciation Dinner for great conversations about health, safety and emergency preparedness.

Scott Heiberger and Melissa Ploeckelman Brown traveled to St. Louis to represent Farm Medicine and the National Children's Center at the Agricultural Media Summit, the world's largest annual gathering of ag communicators.

Our Mission

"With the ultimate goal of improving human health, well-being and safety of rural and agricultural communities, the National Farm Medicine Center acts as a national resource by conducting high-quality research, developing and delivering health and safety information, exploring innovative intervention models, and leading initiatives and networks."

Cultivate is published twice annually by the National Farm Medicine Center, Marshfield, WI. Contact: 1-800-662-6900, nfmcsh@marshfieldresearch.org, www.marshfieldresearch.org/nfmc

