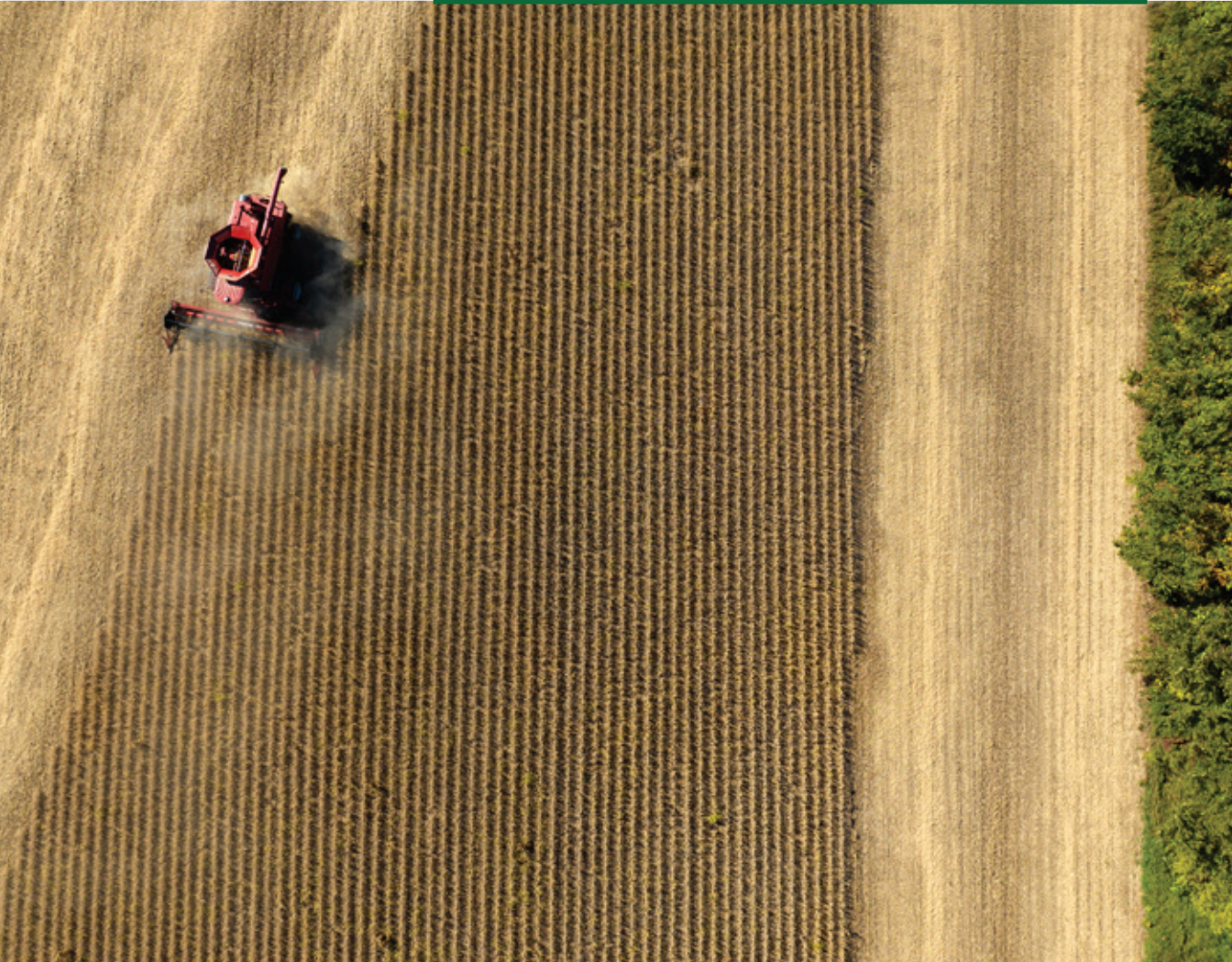




I-CASH | Iowa's Center for
Agricultural Safety and Health



2024 ANNUAL REPORT

DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

As I reflect on my first six months as director of I-CASH, I can't help but feel grateful. I am grateful for the amazing team that I get to work with every day. I am grateful for our advisory board and their dedication to the health and safety of Iowa's agricultural producers. I am grateful for the opportunity to play a small part in protecting our rural communities, and I am grateful for those who came before me, who set the foundation for this organization and provided us with a platform to promote safety and health in our rural communities.

In this report, you will learn about our programs, projects, and our new initiatives. Our seasonal campaigns continue to reach all 99 counties multiple times each year. The Safety Watch columns that we write for Iowa Farmer Today share safety and health recommendations throughout the year. We had another great year investing in Iowa's youth through the Agricultural Youth Grant program and providing funds for the Rollover Protective Structures (ROPS) Rebate Program. The Midwest Rural Agricultural Safety and Health Conference (MRASH) was held in the eastern part of the state this year, and attendees had the opportunity to visit the National Mississippi River Museum and Aquarium for the networking reception.

A new project that is gaining a lot of attention is the "Relationships Can Heal" training. We are working with Dr. David Brown and Tim Christensen from Iowa State University Extension and Outreach to deliver this continuing education training to mental health providers in Iowa. We have had four sessions of the training with two more scheduled for October of 2024. The training focuses on teaching participants how to work with the rural population to effectively deliver mental health care.

In 2024, the I-CASH team adopted the motto "Do Better" with a goal of continuing to deliver impactful and timely information to our partners and the agricultural communities we serve, as well as to build upon these connections to expand our networks. The team has embraced this motto, and we are developing new partnerships to translate and deliver crucial information to the agricultural communities of Iowa and beyond.

This fiscal year brought some staffing changes to I-CASH. As most of you know, Brandi Janssen stepped down as I-CASH director and began a new role at the University of Iowa. Ralph Altmaier retired after a distinguished career with I-CASH and the University of Iowa, and Maddie McCabe graduated from the University of Iowa and started a new full-time position. I would like to take this opportunity to thank Brandi, Ralph, and Maddie for their outstanding service to I-CASH. They continued the legacy of those before them and led I-CASH to new heights. I wish them well in their new endeavors.

It is my distinct pleasure to be the new director of I-CASH. I have spent my career promoting safety and health and look forward to what the future may hold. We will continue to build on the legacy that was started in 1990 and strive to develop new and exciting programs for the future. We will continue to develop partnerships that will help I-CASH in its mission to promote safe and healthy farming. We have a lot of work to do, but with all of us working together, we can continue to achieve great things.

RICH GASSMAN, MS
I-CASH DIRECTOR



I-CASH MISSION

Leading statewide partnerships that promote agricultural safety and health.

I-CASH VISION

Safe and healthy farming for all Iowans.

I-CASH COUNTS

This year I-CASH:

Reached over
1800
households
each quarter with the *Alive and Well* newsletter

Reached over
2500
Iowa farmers, farmworkers
and youth, and distributed
more than
30,600
prevention resources
statewide

Trained
40
mental health providers
on common stressors in
agriculture and how to engage
with the farm community

Hosted
66
participants from 9 states at
the 2023 MRASH Conference

Contributed to **media stories**
in the *Cedar Rapids Gazette*,
the *Daily Iowan*, *KFF Health News*,
and *Civil Eats* on topics
including general farm safety,
stress and mental health,
tractor rollovers, and ROPS

Authored 6 Safety Watch
columns in *Iowa Farmer Today*,
reaching nearly
73,000
households in print and
distributed online through
AgUpdate.com, reaching over
120,000
visitors per month

Provided prevention materials
to **all** ISU Extension and
Outreach and Farm Service
Agency county offices

Awarded **11 grants** to Iowa
youth groups who reached
612
farmers and
976
rural youth with agricultural
safety information

Provided
14
public presentations,
trainings and educational
displays on topics including
stress and mental health,
farm safety outreach, mowing
safety, radon, and Iowa
agriculture

I-CASH IN ACTION

I-CASH delivers information and resources directly to farmers, organizational partners, and health and safety advocates. Developing new partnerships and expanding existing networks builds statewide collaborations to improve the health and safety of rural communities.

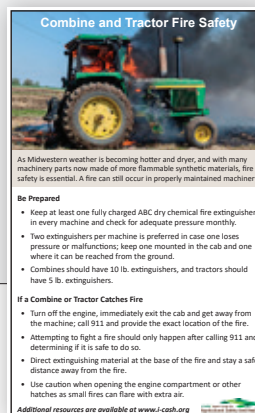


Seasonal Campaigns

I-CASH Seasonal Campaigns are distributed quarterly through all Iowa State University Extension and Outreach (ISUEO) and Farm Service Agency (FSA) offices. Campaign topics focus on current agricultural health and safety issues and often include printable resources, Public Service Announcements (PSAs), and safety items. This year, more than 30,600 prevention materials were provided to ISUEO and FSA offices across the state. Additional resources were provided to the ISUEO office in Madison County for distribution to the residents of Greenfield following the May tornado. Extra resources were also provided to ISUEO offices in Clinton and Cerro Gordo Counties, and FSA offices in Scott and Muscatine Counties. Each campaign topic has a presence on the I-CASH website with additional resources from our partners linked as they become available. Limited quantities of printed resources and items from past campaigns are available, and all resources on the I-CASH website are free to print.

FALL 2023 COMBINE AND TRACTOR FIRES

Combine and tractor fires are events that can be extremely dangerous, as well as cause severe damage to farm equipment. Changing weather, as with intense and frequent drought conditions, can elevate the risk of equipment catching fire. New fire risks also become present as farming equipment grows bigger and more flammable synthetic materials are used. In the fall of 2023, I-CASH developed a Combine and Fire Safety information card to describe the proper steps to prevent a combine or tractor fire, and how to prepare and react if a fire occurs. These cards were distributed to every county in Iowa, along with fire extinguisher maintenance log stickers to record the dates extinguishers were checked and when to replace. In addition, Theisen's Home Farm and Auto helped support this campaign by providing fire extinguisher coupons.



WINTER 2023-2024 SAFETY CALENDAR

Every winter I-CASH creates and distributes a safety calendar with evidence-based safety and health information. Each month includes an important safety or health recommendation, often based on the research conducted at the University of Iowa, or from our partners at Iowa State University. The 2024 calendar topics include health and wellness reminders, controlled burn safety, well water testing, orchard ladder use, youth worker recommendations, tenant landlord communication, succession planning, and firearm safety. We also were able to share the beautiful photography of DeAnn Scott-Harp, Doug Seyb, Mary Swalla Holmes, and Janet Wilson, as well as I-CASH staff members Brandi Janssen, Tabitha Kuehn, and Gayle Olson.



SPRING 2024 RADON

The spring 2024 seasonal campaign focused on radon, a colorless, odorless, tasteless, radioactive gas that is produced from the decay of naturally occurring uranium in the soil. The US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) surveys in Iowa have found that 7 in 10 homes contain radon concentrations above the EPA's action level. As part of this campaign, I-CASH distributed the Iowa Department of Health and Human Services *Radon & You* booklet to help inform Iowa families about the dangers of radon, and how to test for and mitigate radon in their homes.



SUMMER 2024 HIRED AGRICULTURAL YOUTH WORKERS

The summer campaign focused on young worker safety by providing copies of the National Children's Center for Rural and Agricultural Health and Safety's *Hired Agricultural Youth Work Guidelines* booklet to all FSA and ISUEO offices. Along with the booklet, hearing protection and sunscreen packets were provided to distribute to office visitors during the summer months. The I-CASH "Be an Informed Employee/Be an Informed Employer" information cards were also distributed to the ISUEO offices to provide recommendations for employers hiring young workers, and employees working on a farm in the summer.



Tractor Safety Training at Grow: Johnson County

In June, I-CASH Director Rich Gassman conducted a tractor safety training at Grow: Johnson County, a program of the Iowa Valley Resource Conservation & Development that produces over 40,000 pounds of produce each year and directly donates to partner agencies in Johnson County. In addition, Grow: Johnson County trains aspiring and beginning farmers through its apprentice program. The training focused on safe tractor operation and practices when working near tractors; rollover, run over, and noise hazards; as well as precautions to take around PTO-driven equipment and hydraulics.



THANK YOU TO OUR PARTNERS WHO HELP INSPIRE ACTION

- Central States Center for Agricultural Safety and Health
- Farm Service Agency
- Grow: Johnson County
- Mary Swalla Holmes
- Iowa Department of Health and Human Services
- Iowa State University Extension and Outreach
- Iowa Valley Resource Conservation & Development
- Brandi Janssen
- Tabitha Kuehn
- National Children's Center for Agricultural Safety
- Gayle Olson
- DeAnn Scott-Harp
- Doug Seyb
- Theisen's Home Farm and Auto
- Janet Wilson



Rich Gassman, I-CASH Director, leads a tractor safety training at the Grow: Johnson County farm. (photos courtesy of Grow: Johnson County).



Relationships Can Heal
Knowing the Farmer Client



Relationships Can Heal

Relationships Can Heal: Knowing the Farmer Client is a continuing education training that provides an overview of agricultural practices in the Midwest to inform mental health providers about their agricultural clients' work experience. I-CASH is partnering with Iowa State University Extension and Outreach (ISUEO) to provide the course, which focuses on the culture, occupation, and well-being of farm and ranch producers. In April, training sessions were held in Atlantic and Grinnell; October training sessions are scheduled in Dubuque and Fort Dodge.

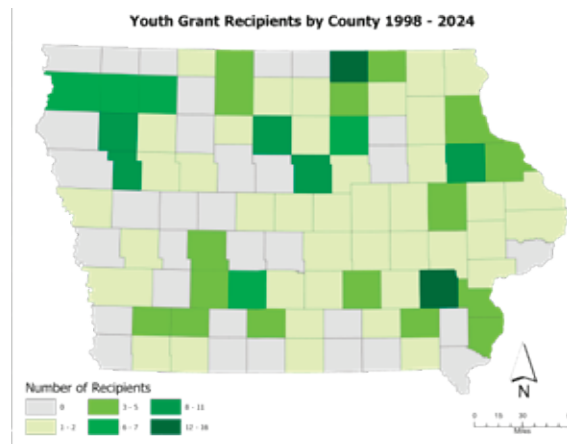


Tim Christensen, ISUEO Farm Management Specialist, leads a discussion at the Relationships Can Heal training in Grinnell, IA.

CONNECTED TO THE RURAL COMMUNITY

Agricultural Youth Grants

Each year I-CASH provides grants to Iowa youth groups who help educate community members and improve safety on farms in their area. Since 1998, I-CASH has awarded 226 grants in 67 Iowa counties, totaling nearly \$115,000. In 2024, 11 grants were funded:



- ADAMS COUNTY ISU EXTENSION AND OUTREACH**
 Area youth promoted fire safety in their local community by gathering information and delivering materials to farmers in the field. The goal was to bring fire awareness to farmers, and close generational gaps between the students and local farmers by building connections. The project also included a display at the county fair and a presentation to the local Farm Bureau and Extension Council on the importance and impact of fire safety.
- CAC MEDIA GROUP**
 CAC Media Group hosted their first ever “Ladies Livestock Luncheon” bringing together middle and high-school students involved in livestock production with women in professional roles in the community. The luncheon included presentations, hands-on activities, and a time for questions and discussion. Topics included safe livestock handling practices and disease prevention, along with promotion of women as livestock producers. The organizers at CAC media group want to assure that the next generation of women not only have the skills needed to handle livestock, but also the confidence to be a part of the decision-making process.

- CALAMUS WHEATLAND FFA**
 As part of her FFA Ag Communications SAE, Natalie Schroeder created minute-long safety videos on anhydrous awareness during the summer. The videos will be shown to all Calamus-Wheatland’s elementary school students and shared on the FFA website and social media sites to reach a broader audience. At the end of the video, elementary students will be quizzed, and one winner will receive a prize in the theme of a video topic.
- CENTRAL COMMUNITY FFA**
 FFA members created first aid kits and personally delivered them to area farmers. The items in the kits are suitable for farm situations, and include an informational flyer developed by the FFA members explaining how to properly use the items, as well as suggestions on where to locate the kits.
- FLOYD COUNTY ISU EXTENSION AND OUTREACH, AND CHARLES CITY FFA CHAPTER**
 During the 2024 harvest season, youth will collect and pack safety and health resources in 5-gallon buckets to deliver to area farmers. In addition to youth, the program will use community volunteers to distribute the buckets in support of area farmers.

I-CASH provides resources to rural communities that have statewide impact. Empowering local partners inspires action, increases awareness, and helps I-CASH broaden its reach.

- FRANKLIN COUNTY ISU EXTENSION AND OUTREACH**
 4-H club members organized and presented a farm safety program to youth and their parents/guardians following the “Little Farmer Day Camp” in May. The program highlighted awareness of farm safety and provided local families with farm safety basics. The event included a hearing protection demonstration, and each family was given a farm safety kit. 4-H members researched the topics, created the farm safety kits, promoted the event, and presented the information.
- LOUISA COUNTY ISU EXTENSION AND OUTREACH**
 A farm safety day for elementary students was held at the Louisa County Fairgrounds. The interactive sessions provided hands-on experiences from local professionals and high school peer mentors as students moved from station to station. Louisa 4-H County Council members and Louisa County Extension will create a video featuring the students sharing what they learned. When completed, ISU Extension, the partners leading the stations, and the participating schools will post the video on social media and websites.
- MMCRU FFA**
 Safety on the farm, especially around machinery, was the focus of this project. High school students led presentations to 295 elementary students as they rotated through seven different stations pertaining to farm safety. Large machinery was parked at the safety day, allowing elementary students the opportunity to sit in the seats and learn where blind spots are located around a piece of equipment. The MMCRU FFA Chapter supplied each student with a high visibility safety vest and explained how wearing a vest can help attract attention and increase visibility.

- SOUTHWEST VALLEY FFA**
 FFA members worked with their school nurse, local healthcare professionals, and local first responders to create first aid kits for farmers to keep in their equipment. The members also researched and developed educational resources to distribute with the kits.
- STAMPEDING CLOVERS 4-H**
 4-H club members made posters to promote ATV safety and helmet use at local events, including the Muscatine County horse shows in June, July, and August. The project also highlighted ATV safety and helmet usage at the Muscatine County Fair. To increase engagement with the safety campaign, 4-H members developed a “helmet hair” photo/video contest with prizes.
- WASHINGTON COUNTY ISU EXTENSION AND OUTREACH**
 Washington County 4-H and ISU Extension and Outreach plans to continue their popular “Stay Safe, Take a Break” program, where students meet farmers in the field during harvest, provide a resource bag, and remind them to take breaks. This year’s project focus is grain safety (including unloading, hauling, and grain bins). 4-H members also created a display about the “Stay Safe, Take a Break” project for their county fair.



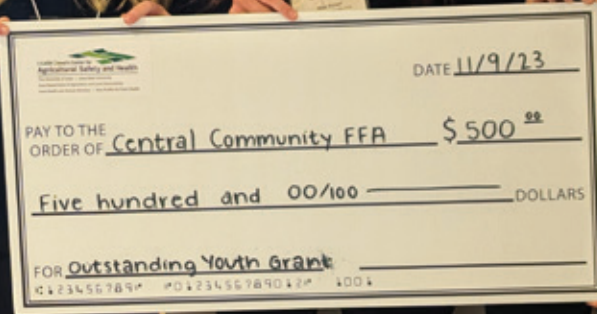
Above: Central Community FFA members created first aid kits and delivered them to area farmers.

Left: Elementary students received high visibility vests as part of a farm safety day held by MMCRU FFA.





Tabitha Kuehn, I-CASH Outreach Coordinator (at left) presents FFA members Crystal Goodrich, Blair Scherf, Payton Stannard, and FFA Advisor Meghan Bond with the 2023 Outstanding Youth Grant Award



THANK YOU TO OUR PARTNERS WHO HELP US CONNECT WITH RURAL COMMUNITIES

- Adams County ISUEO
- CAC Media Group
- Calamus Wheatland FFA
- Central Community FFA
- Charles City FFA
- Floyd County ISUEO
- Franklin County ISUEO
- Louisa County ISUEO
- MMCRU FFA
- National ROPS Rebate Program
- Southwest Valley FFA
- Stampeding Clovers 4-H
- Washington County ISUEO

2023 Outstanding Youth Grant

Each year, I-CASH presents an Outstanding Youth Grant Award at the Midwest Rural Agricultural Safety and Health Conference (MRASH). In 2023, the award went to Central Community FFA in Elkader, Iowa for their project which addressed ultraviolet (UV) safety. For their project, students visited local farms and delivered UV safety items, informational resources, and meals to local farmers. They spoke with farmers about the importance of sun protection and listened as some farmers shared their experiences with skin cancer. The FFA members organized and completed every step of the project, including contacting and arranging meetings with partners, and researching, selecting, and sourcing the safety items. Through this process, they learned about safety, as well as project management and communication. This was Central Community FFA's first year applying for and receiving the grant, and they are looking forward to future applications to build on the success of this project.



BEFORE

ROPS Rebate Program

I-CASH continues to devote funding to the Rollover Protective Structures (ROPS) Rebate Program, a cost-share program for retrofitting older tractors with rollover protection, partnering with the National ROPS Rebate Program to offer rebates for Iowa farmers. When used correctly with a seatbelt, ROPS are 99% effective in preventing death in the case of a rollover. Since the beginning of the I-CASH rebate program in April 2020, I-CASH has assisted with 73 retrofits.



AFTER

COMMUNICATING BEST PRACTICES

“There was insight about what does and doesn’t work within ag education, and this was a great discussion which will stick with me going forward.”

Midwest Rural Agricultural Safety and Health Conference

In honor of 25 years of I-CASH’s Agricultural Youth Safety Grants, the 2023 Midwest Rural Agricultural Safety and Health Conference (MRASH) was dedicated to “Celebrating Youth on the Farm” on November 8-9, 2023. Iowa’s State FFA President, Holly Schmitt, delivered the keynote presentation, “Opportunities and Concerns of Youth in Agriculture Yesterday and Today” relating some of her own experiences growing up on a NE Iowa dairy farm and being involved in both 4-H and FFA. She then joined a multigenerational panel to address opportunities and concerns in agriculture from different perspectives. The two grandfathers on the panel discussed changes during their farming careers and concerns for their grandchildren.

Following the keynote session, participants attended various presentations during the four breakout sessions. Over thirty speakers from nine states submitted abstracts for presentations and posters, and many were first time MRASH attendees. The evening poster reception was held at the National Mississippi River Museum, a beautiful venue that combines an aquarium with exhibits on regional history. Attendees enjoyed delicious refreshments and listened to the River Reeds saxophone quartet while viewing posters, visiting museum displays and networking with colleagues.

The MRASH keynote panel addressed opportunities and concerns in agriculture from different perspectives.



The second day kicked off with “Integrating Research and Public Policy.” Sally Stutsman, former Johnson County supervisor and Iowa legislator, and Brad Wolters, Director of Federal Government Relations for the Marshfield Clinic Health System, presented perspectives on communication with policy makers. Florence Becot from the National Farm Medicine Center explained how she and her colleagues were able to leverage their research to gain support for improved childcare within the proposed Farm Bill. In the second session, Diane Rohlman from the University of Iowa discussed youth employment policies. Marsha Salzwedel from the National Children’s Center for Agricultural Health and Safety premiered the *Hired Ag Youth Work Guidelines* booklet; her colleague, Cassandra Peltier shared research on how to increase use of the guidelines by employers.

I-CASH communicates best practices through a wide range of channels. We share current research, identify emerging issues, and provide updated resources to ensure consistent attention to agricultural health and safety.



“The policy panel was outstanding! I feel like policy is the next big leap for our field.”

Conference participants further explored what they learned at the conference through several small group networking discussions and made plans to integrate the information into ongoing work. At the closing luncheon, the Central Community FFA Chapter was awarded the 2023 I-CASH Outstanding Agricultural Youth Grant.

Following the conference, many attendees traveled to the National Education Center for Agricultural Safety (NECAS) in Peosta, Iowa to attend a post-conference workshop sponsored by the Great Plains Center for Agricultural Health (GPCAH). The workshop focused on Emergency Preparedness and Disaster Planning with Nick Ostrem discussing Disaster Prepwise, Jakob Hanschu explaining Farm MAPPER, and Dan Neenan of NECAS demonstrating several of the rescue training simulations available from NECAS.

“This was a great conference to learn from people who I don’t usually get to network with.”

Special thanks to the MRASH planning team and sponsors. The planning team included Florence Becot (National Farm Medicine Center), Devon Charlier (Upper Midwest Agricultural Safety and Health), Marsha Cheyney (GPCAH), Jana Davidson (Progressive Ag Foundation), Ellen Duysen (Central States Center for Agricultural Safety and Health), Charlotte Halverson (AgriSafe), Josie Rudolphi (University of Illinois), and Ralph Altmaier, Tabitha Kuehn and Gayle Olson (I-CASH). Gold level sponsors were I-CASH, GPCAH, and Central Midwest Team Climate Adaptation Partnerships; Silver level sponsor was Central States Center for Agricultural Safety and Health.

Alive & Well Newsletter

In collaboration with the Great Plains Center for Agricultural Health, I-CASH distributes a quarterly online newsletter to more than 1,800 people. The newsletter helps connect our health and safety community with agricultural news and events, new research projects and findings, opportunities for funding, and celebrations of award winners.

Conservation Districts of Iowa Newsletter

I-CASH regularly contributes articles to the Conservation Districts of Iowa’s monthly *Connections* newsletter. This newsletter is distributed to the soil and water conservation district commissioners that represent the 100 districts across the 99 counties in Iowa. Various county level Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship (IDALS) and USDA Natural Resources Conservation Services (NRCS) staff also receive these newsletters. Articles promote the I-CASH seasonal campaign topics, encourage readers to consider where they get their farm safety information, and share timely health and safety information.



THANK YOU TO OUR PARTNERS WHO HELP US COMMUNICATE BEST PRACTICES

- Ag Update
- AgriSafe
- Central Community FFA
- Central Midwest Team Climate Adaptation Partnerships
- Central States Center for Agricultural Safety and Health
- Great Plains Center for Agricultural Health
- Illinois Farmer Today
- Iowa Farmer Today
- Marshfield Clinic Health System
- National Children's Center for Agricultural Health and Safety
- National Education Center for Agricultural Safety
- National Farm Medicine Center
- National Mississippi River Museum
- Progressive Ag Foundation
- University of Illinois
- University of Iowa
- Upper Midwest Agricultural Safety and Health

Safety Watch

Safety Watch is a monthly column published by *Iowa Farmer Today* which features agricultural safety and health prevention information, success stories, and producer profiles. A partnership between the Great Plains Center for Agricultural Health and I-CASH, the column reaches nearly 73,000 households in print and is distributed online through AgUpdate.com, reaching over 120,000 visitors per month.

I-CASH Safety Watch Columns

August 2023 – Lawn mowers put young children at risk

October 2023 – Tractor fire a reminder to be prepared

December 2023 – Navigating the winter wonderland by snowmobile

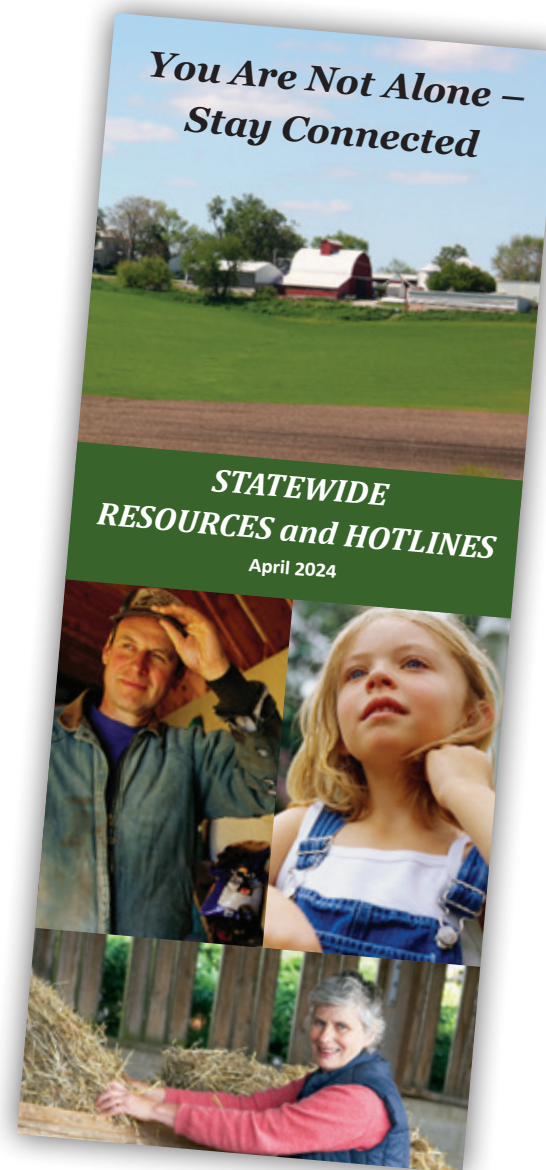
February 2024 – Young Iowans work to improve farm safety

April 2024 – Test time: Regular radon, paint and water checks keep rural homes safe

June 2023 – Storm safety: Plan ahead for severe spring storms that can damage farms

Updates from the Field

Since 2003, I-CASH has maintained a free monthly listserve providing abstracts from recent research publications on rural and agricultural health and safety issues. The updates have become an efficient way for health and safety professionals to receive timely information, and subscribers can be sent the full-text articles upon request. This year the topics included: cancer prevention; combine safety; controlled burn safety; farm safety, health, and wellness communication; farm safety walk-through/hazard assessment; horticulture and orchard safety; livestock safety at the fair; power take-off (PTO) shields; snowmobile safety; taking breaks from long hours on farm equipment; and well testing and water quality.



Statewide Resources and Hotlines

The Statewide Resources and Hotlines brochure was created as part of the 2017 seasonal campaign which focused on the importance of mental and behavioral health in rural communities. Updated annually in both print and electronic formats, it has remained one of I-CASH's most requested resources. The brochure includes contact information for crisis and suicide prevention hotlines, statewide resources, and training information.

I-CASH Advisory Board

The I-CASH Advisory Board, a diverse group of agricultural stakeholders and health and safety professionals, provides the organization with deep expertise and statewide engagement. Advisory Board members bring experience with agriculture, youth safety, migrant farm worker issues, academic research, rural health, health care, and outreach. In addition to their expertise, Advisory Board members help develop and implement all I-CASH's initiatives.

Greg Alber, Iowa Corn Promotion Board, Producer

Betsy Danielson, Iowa State University Pesticide Safety Education Program

Kelley Donham, University of Iowa Professor Emeritus, Producer

Shay Foulk, Ag View Solutions Safety Consultant, Producer

Charlotte Halverson, AgriSafe Network

Amanda Hartman, Farm Service Agency

Samra Hiros, Iowa Department of Health and Human Services State Office of Rural Health

Tammy Jacobs, Iowa State University Iowa Concern Hotline, Producer

Charles Jennissen, University of Iowa Hospitals & Clinics

Norlin Mommsen, State Representative District 97, Producer

Gretchen Mosher, Iowa State University Department of Agricultural and Biosystems Engineering

Dan Neenan, National Education Center for Agricultural Safety

Chris Petersen, Producer

Sonia Reyes, Iowa Department of Human Rights

Diane Rohlman, University of Iowa Department of Occupational and Environmental Health

Carolyn Sheridan, Ag Health & Safety Alliance, Producer

Roger Stutsman, Producer

Patrick Taggart, Proteus, Inc.

Cheryl Tevis, Iowa Women in Agriculture, Producer

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Maddie McCabe, BA, Program Assistant

Kay Mohling, MA, Program Coordinator

Gayle Olson, MS, CHES, Assistant to the Director



I-CASH | Iowa's Center for
Agricultural Safety and Health



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