

2025 MRASH is in the Books!

by Gayle Olson, MS, CHES, I-CASH Assistant to the Director

More than 60 people gathered at the 2025 Midwest Rural Agricultural Safety and Health (MRASH) Conference on November 12-14 at Hotel Millwright in Amana. The conference theme was “Cultivating Connections: Health, Safety and Wellness in Agriculture” and the focus was on concepts and partners in the OneHealth approach, the intersection of human, animal and environmental health. Dr. Jeff Bender from the Upper Midwest Agricultural Safety and Health Center (UMASH) at the University of Minnesota started us off, covering some of the basic concepts of OneHealth and discussing potential new partnerships to consider. Megan Hartwig of the Iowa Cancer Consortium facilitated a panel discussion. Joining Dr. Bender on the panel were Dr. Glenda Dvorak from the Center for Food Security and Public Health (CFSPH) at Iowa State University, Dr. Jennifer Meece from the Marshfield Clinic Research Institute in Wisconsin, and Dr. Matt Nonnenmann from the Central States Center for Agricultural Safety and Health (CS-CASH) at the University of Nebraska Medical Center.



Midwest Rural Agricultural Safety and Health Conference
Cultivating Connections:
Health, Safety & Wellness in Agriculture

The afternoon session kicked off with the fast-paced “Cultivating Conversations” workshops that were very popular at the 2024 MRASH conference. This year, the focus for each table was related to OneHealth concepts. Participants could select four of the nine topics, each with 20 minutes of interactive exploration and discussion. A huge thanks to our table leaders who all did such a great job of fitting key points into a quick and ever-moving format.



Marsha Cheyney, GPCAH demonstrates *Wearable Gas Monitors - When, Why and How* (above). Dr. Glenda Dvorak, CFSPH leads a table workshop on *All-Hazards Preparedness* (right)



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“Too many great topics to pick from – but that’s a good thing!”
-- Cultivating Conversations attendee

The last session of the day was the Mental Wellness Workout, where presenters shared resources and led exercises designed to build the mental health of those attending. The presenters also provided outreach ideas used to connect to farm audiences. We learned that juggling too many balloons requires recovery time. We practiced breathing, stretching and reflection. We played with mental wellness cards, were introduced to several successful mental wellness programs and discovered how to help farmers deal with depressing situations by focusing on their connections to others and helping them become more resilient.

Director's Message

by Renée Anthony PhD, CIH, CSP

All 12 US Ag Centers (including our Great Plains Center for Agricultural Health) survived federal funding cuts and received funding to continue operations for our fourth year of a five-year grant award. We are susceptible to an automatic stop work order at any time, and many centers like ours have had great staff leave for “more secure” job opportunities. But we have adjusted our workloads and hit the ground running to focus on work that can persist if our funding stops. This issue of Alive & Well includes some project updates – if you have any interest in being involved in these projects, just reach out and let us know what we can do to plug you in.



Renée Anthony PhD,
CIH, CSP

One of our biggest outreach activities at the GPCAH has been our educational program. We led the nation on helping health care providers, safety and health experts, and farmers understand the basic hazards of our Midwest farming operations through the Ag Safety and Health Core Course. We have developed an [alternative structure](#) to the classic 40-hour “sit in a classroom” class, which we have discussed previously.

- The **Ag Health 101** class is a self-paced 10-unit series that allows for an 8-contact hour certificate of completion when all units (and associated quizzes) are completed.
- Our 11 online modules provide another 12 hours of education, which we grouped together as the **Intermediate Ag Health** program.
- **Ag Health Academy** is a monthly live lesson and networking session (on Zoom) to dive in deeper to provide practical solutions and timely updates on farming hazards and prevention strategies.

All programs are free to take. You will receive a certificate upon completion of all the modules. The Ag Health 101 and Intermediate Ag Health are available to complete at any time by accessing materials on the web.

The **Ag Health Academy** meets monthly – we completed three sessions in 2025 (with the informational sessions recorded and available to all) but had to pause when federal funding cuts and no-contact orders limited access to speakers. However, we are happy to announce the return of the [Academy](#) in January 2026. Unlike the other two programs, Academy attendees must enroll in this advanced course, which requires completion of either the classic 40-hour core course (offered at any of our partner institutions) or the basic Ag Health 101 class.

Topics for 2026 focus on needs assessments and feedback from existing courses. From January through August, we will meet live to discuss and build Academy members’ skills in the areas of machine safety, PPE selection for pesticides, respiratory protection selection and tips, and gas monitor use.

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Farm Families Alive & Well
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Find us on Facebook at
www.facebook.com/GPCAH

gpcah.org



See article on [page 8](#) for more information about this program. You still have plenty of time to complete Ag Health 101 if you want to apply to join the Academy for our January 14 session, which kicks off the 3-part series on machine safety.

Our **FarmSafe Podcast** is preparing for another season, again using the bundled episode drop format starting at the end of January. If you have a story to tell and share on a topic that will help protect our farmers, we hope to hear from you. We love to include farmers voices and stories in each episode – and our editors do a great job editing audio to smooth out the “ums” and other verbal ticks, so let us know if you have a story to tell that will help others.

On the research side of the GPCAH, our teams are continuing to help communities reduce roadway crashes between vehicles and farm vehicles, assisting caregivers by making farms safer for family members with dementia, and testing systems to remove aerosols and viruses from livestock buildings in real time. Our whole-body vibration team has spent the harvest season testing a measuring device, and they will be spending their winter analyzing data and making modifications in preparation for planting in April.

We have also funded a new investigator who will focus on risks of **tick-borne diseases** in our region, so watch for updates on getting involved in this new study. This research further builds on information we have shared in [Safety Watch](#) and on the FarmSafe Podcast ([S3E16](#) and [S3E17](#)) to understand how to prevent developing serious health problems that are now affecting farmers in our region.

Thanks to all our farmer participants who are giving their time and providing feedback to our investigators so we can provide the broader community with resources addressing ongoing questions in these important health and safety areas.

Dr. Renée Anthony directs the GPCAH, housed in the Department of Occupational and Environmental Health of the College of Public Health. She can be reached at 319/335-4429 (renee-anthony@uiowa.edu).



Investigating occupational risk factors and preventative practices for tick exposure and tick-borne diseases in farmers

Agricultural Community and Tick Exposure (ACTE) Project

Dr. Kathryn Dalton, an assistant professor at the University of Iowa College of Public Health, is investigating occupational risk factors and preventative practices for tick exposure and tick-borne diseases in farmers. With [the rise of ticks this year](#), it is essential to capture knowledge, attitudes, and practices on perceived risk within the agricultural community in order to develop effective and feasible interventions to protect farmers. We are seeking input and involvement from farmers in this collaborative community project – learn more and get involved [here](#). Hear more about the ticks and tick-borne diseases from Dr. Dalton in her recent [interview on WQAD](#) and on the [University's Plugged into Public Health podcast](#).

2025 I-CASH Outstanding Agricultural Youth Grant Award

by Kim McMichael, BS, I-CASH Outreach Coordinator

The Iowa's Center for Agricultural Safety and Health (I-CASH) Agricultural Youth Grant Program funds innovative projects designed by youth to raise awareness about farm safety. Every year, I-CASH awards one grant recipient with the Outstanding Youth Grant Award, an honor that highlights a project that stood out in its youth involvement and impact. At this year's MRASH award luncheon, I-CASH announced Washington County Extension & 4-H as the winner of the 2025 Outstanding Youth Grant Award. Reese Conrad and Brynn Conrad, Washington County 4-H members, and Holly Beinhart, ISU Extension, were presented with a \$500 check!



Reese and Brynn Conrad, Washington County 4-H members, and Holly Beinhart, ISU Extension, accept the 2025 Outstanding Agricultural Youth Grant Award.



Washington County 4-H members delivered farm safety bags to farmers in their community.

The "Stay Safe, Take a Break" project emphasizes

the importance of farm safety, encouraging farmers to take breaks and remain mindful of their well-being during these high-stress periods. Farm incidents can happen suddenly and without warning, making prevention and awareness especially critical. Safety bags were provided that included farmer-focused mental health resources, gratitude coloring pages from their younger 4-H and Clover Kid youth members, protein snacks to encourage proper nutrition during long harvest days, and essential safety items commonly needed while in the field, e.g., chemical gloves, first aid kits, reflective tape and ear plugs. These items support both physical and mental health, helping farmers stay alert and safe while operating farm equipment and protecting themselves, their families, and the Washington County community.

4-H members were involved in gathering, packing, and delivering these bags to 100 Washington County farmers. Through this project, Washington County youth developed valuable skills by planning and carrying out a large project from start to finish. They strengthened their communication abilities and built meaningful connections within the farming community while delivering the bags.

One aspect that made this project stand out was that Washington County went above and beyond to acquire additional funding. They reached out to extension sponsors who provided additional monetary and physical donations for this project along with local businesses who allowed them to purchase several items at wholesale cost to be able to add additional value to the safety bags. They aim to sustain this project through continued partnerships to support the safety of local farmers for years to come. Congratulations to Washington County 4-H for being recognized as the Outstanding 2025 Youth Grant winner!

Applications for 2026 Ag Youth Grants will be available in January, visit www.i-cash.org for details.

Safety Watch: Require Gas Monitors for Safe Maintenance

by Mandy Archer, BA, GPCAH Outreach Specialist

Recent media stories have highlighted the danger of confined spaces and manure gases. Headlines like “Three more killed in confined space” and “Six people are dead, including a teenager” remind us that gas hazards can have deadly results. Dan Neenan, director of the National Education Center for Agricultural Safety, calls this a “low-frequency, high-risk type of incident. It doesn’t happen that often, but boy, the dangers are sure there,” he said.

Confined spaces offer limited entry and exit points. Often, people rush in after a victim to try and save them. This results in multiple deaths. One deadly killer is hydrogen sulfide (H₂S). At high concentrations, olfactory fatigue occurs, and the gas loses its distinctive “rotten egg” smell. A gas monitor is necessary when working near deadly gases like hydrogen sulfide.



Marsha Cheyney, GPCAH Evaluation and Outreach Coordinator, demonstrates bump testing at the Minnesota FarmFest.

Read the full *Safety Watch* article to learn more by following this link: <https://gpcah.public-health.uiowa.edu/wp-content/uploads/2025/11/KR-SafetyWatch-11-9-25.pdf>.

I-CASH Seasonal Campaigns

by Kim McMichael, BS, I-CASH Outreach Coordinator

2025 Fall Seasonal Campaign



I-CASH’s 2025 fall seasonal campaign focused on equipment lighting and marking to reduce the risk of rural roadway crashes. Harvest season means that there will be more farm vehicles on the road, and motorists need to recognize that and exercise patience. Farmers will want to make sure all vehicle lights are operating and ensure that farm vehicles are clearly marked with a slow-moving vehicle (SMV) emblem. For our fall campaign, I-CASH distributed a resource from our partners at the [Great Plains Center for Agricultural Health](#) showing ASABE lighting and marking guidelines and safety guidelines to follow when driving farm equipment on roadways. In addition, we provided drawstring bags with a reflective strip.

2025 Winter Seasonal Campaign

Each winter I-CASH creates and distributes a farm safety calendar with health and safety recommendations. In addition, the calendars showcase Iowa’s beautiful farm landscapes. The 2026 I-CASH Farm Safety Calendars are now available at ISU Extension and Outreach, and Farm Service Agency county offices. Calendar topics this year include information on mental health, succession planning, cancer, respiratory health, ticks, and heat-related illnesses.



Our poster reception capped Day 1 of the conference. Posters represented varied research and outreach projects from many organizations and universities. Music was provided by the band Checks and Balances, formed by several southeast Iowa farmers. Networking, catching up with friends and eating delicious food was also an important part of the reception.

Day two started with the MRASH breakout sessions selected from submitted abstracts. One attendee quipped, “A Nebraskan, an Iowan and a Wisconsinite walk into a bar..” This was true of one of the most unique settings for MRASH breakouts, the Electric Thread bar at Hotel Millwright, which was closed for business, but open for learning. The projects presented were interesting, the discussion was lively, and the camaraderie was second to none. The Electric Thread was one of three locations in Hotel Millwright where conference attendees heard 18 different research and outreach summaries. The wide range of topics included tickborne diseases, attitudes toward firearm storage, respiratory protection, mental health, injury prevention, ATVs, grain handling, parent education, and ergonomics. Presenters from five different states shared their results.



MRASH attendees enjoyed local food and music while visiting with poster presenters at the reception.



Ellen Duysen, CS-CASH, provided a presentation in the Electric Thread bar, one of the unique conference settings at the Hotel Millwright.

The Hotel Millwright provided a great venue for learning and relaxing. A shout-out to the hotel’s chef for working with us to offer food featuring ingredients produced by local farmers. Did you know that when you host an event, many chefs enjoy the challenge of creating new menu items from the high-quality ingredients they can purchase locally?

It takes many people and institutions working together to pull off a successful MRASH Conference each year. Special thanks to our major sponsors: I-CASH, GPCAH, Central States Center for Agricultural Safety and Health and, new this year, the CHS Foundation. The support from our sponsors and all our exhibitors allow us to offer discounted registration fees to students and farmers.

The MRASH Planning Team meets monthly most of the year to make the program happen. When conference time rolls around, everyone pitches in to make sure it all runs smoothly. If you are interested in becoming a sponsor, an exhibitor or a planning team member for MRASH 2026, contact gayle-olson@uiowa.edu.

Conference attendees love learning about the projects, the friendly atmosphere of the conference, and the opportunities for collaboration that arise. One attendee commented that they learned so much about One-Health concepts. Another said it was “2nd time attending and I love this conference!” One of the best compliments came in the parking lot as we were packing up. A hotel staff member who coordinated most of the on-site logistics said our group was a favorite among her staff. She told me that it was so obvious that we are a group of people who truly care about each other and that such positivity just radiated from us and spread to the staff as well. Let your lights shine, dear colleagues - and make plans to join us at MRASH 2026!

New Online Resource Empowers Journalists to Help Save Lives on the Farm

by Jenn Patterson, MLitt, GPCAH Center Coordinator

Farmers face some of the most dangerous working conditions in the country—and journalists have the power to help change that.

The Great Plains Center for Agricultural Health (GPCAH) has launched a new online resource page designed specifically for journalists who report on agricultural injuries, hazards, and safety solutions. This tool equips media professionals with the data, terminology, and expert contacts they need to tell stories that not only inform—but prevent future tragedies.

“Every story about a farm injury is an opportunity to save a life,” said Renée Anthony, PhD, Director at GPCAH. “When journalists report with clarity and context, they help farmers recognize risks and adopt safer practices. That’s why we created this resource—to support accurate, prevention-focused reporting.” The content addressed common questions journalists have—like where to get up to date information on farmer injuries—and tips on terminology to construct impactful stories that can also improve farm safety.

The journalist resource page includes:

- Recent injury trends and data from Iowa and national sources
- Guidance on navigating Bureau of Labor Statistics databases
- Terminology tips to improve clarity and impact (e.g., “incident” vs. “accident”)
- One-pagers on equipment hazards and safety practices
- FarmSafe Podcast episodes and expert commentary on safety storytelling
- Contact information for technical experts and story support

The resource also encourages journalists to use language that empowers change. For example, replacing “tractor accident” with “tractor rollover resulting in serious injury” helps readers visualize the hazard and consider how it might apply to their own farm. Similarly, using “fatally injured” instead of “killed” shifts the focus to the event and its preventability.

“Farmers trust journalists to tell their stories. Now we’re asking the media to help build a culture of safety—one headline at a time,” said Richard Gassman, I-CASH Director.

Gas Monitors
For manure handling and grain bin entry

Ear-fit-Check
When you encounter loud sounds on a farm, this one-pager provides information on testing goodness of fit for hearing protection

Respirator Fit-Testing
When farmers use respirators on the farm (e.g., for pesticide handling/application, to minimize allergic reactions to organic dusts, or when responding to zoonotic diseases)

FarmSafe Podcast Episode Guide
A one-pager that contains information on episodes that are related to stories you might be working on (organized by topic)

Visit the journalist resource page at gpcah.public-health.uiowa.edu/journalist-resources to explore tools that support impactful, prevention-focused reporting and help protect one of America’s most vital resources: our farmers.

Ag Health Academy Returns in January!

by Jenn Patterson, MLitt, GPCAH Center Coordinator

Our popular advanced safety and health series is back with monthly sessions starting January 2026. Join experts for 90 minutes of practical learning on topics like machine safety, PPE, and respirator tips. Complete 10 sessions to earn a certificate!



The **monthly 90-minute sessions** are designed for farmers, agricultural professionals, extension agents, healthcare providers, and rural health advocates. These advanced classes provide **in-depth training on current hazards**, combining expert-led discussions with practical demonstrations to strengthen safety skills across rural communities.

Session Details:

- **When:** 2nd Wednesday of each month
- **Time:** Noon–1:30 PM (Central)
- **Format:** 60 minutes of expert discussion + 30 minutes of hands-on demonstrations

Participants who complete **10 sessions and assignments** will earn a **certificate of completion**, demonstrating advanced knowledge in agricultural health and safety.

Prerequisites:

- **Ag Health 101** (Free, self-paced, 8 CEUs available)
- PPE module from Intermediate Ag Health (before April)

2026 Topics Include:

- **Jan–Mar:** Machine Safety (Basics, Safeguarding, Lockout/Tagout)
- **Apr–May:** Pesticides and Personal Protective Equipment
- **Jun–Jul:** Respirator Selection and Practical Tips
- **Aug:** Gas Monitor Updates

For more information, registration details, and access to archived 2025 recordings, visit <https://gpcah.public-health.uiowa.edu/ag-health-101/>.

Coming January 2026: FarmSafe Podcast Season 5 Bundle!

by Jenn Patterson, MLitt, GPCAH Center Coordinator

Kick off the new year with **exclusive safety insights for farmers and rural communities**. This special bundle includes **expert interviews, real-life stories, and practical tips** to keep you and your operation safe.

Topics include: Research updates, new partnerships, and more!

Share Your Story! Do you or someone you know have a personal story about an injury on the farm? We want to hear from you! **The Farm Safe Podcast** returns in **January 2026**, and we're looking for farmers willing to share their experiences. Your story can help highlight the importance of farm safety and make a real difference in preventing injuries and illness on the farm.

Listen to previous episodes at <https://gpcah.public-health.uiowa.edu/farmsafe/>.



Do you Need CEUs?

We Recommend AG HEALTH 101: A Self-paced Course in Agricultural Health

by Jenn Patterson, MLitt, GPCAH Center Coordinator

If you work with farmers or rural communities, understanding agricultural health hazards is essential. **Ag Health 101** was designed for health care providers, health aides, and advocates to learn about common farm hazards and prevention strategies based on research and best practices.

What's Included?

- **10 Audio-Based Units:** Each unit focuses on specific farm hazards and exposures, with short chapters that explain risks and prevention strategies.
- **Supporting Materials:** Downloadable resources for reference, discussion questions, and additional reading.
- **Flexible Learning:** Listen anywhere, anytime; perfect for busy professionals

Continuing Education Credits Available - Complete all 10 units and quizzes to earn CEUs. Approved for:

- **Nurses/Nurse Practitioners** – ANCC contact hours
- **Pharmacists/Pharmacy Technicians** – ACPE contact hours
- **Physicians** – AMA PRA Category 1 Credits™
- **Other Health Care Providers** – Certificate of participation available

Ready to Get Started? Visit the [course page](#) and begin earning your CEUs before the year ends!



Upcoming Workshop: Farm Families Coping with Dementia (FFCD)

Concerned about someone in a farming community showing signs of dementia? Join our free, online educational series designed for caregivers of individuals living or working on farms who are experiencing memory loss or confusion.

Workshop Dates: January 26 – February 16, 2026

Format: 4 weekly sessions (1 hour each) via Zoom

Topics Covered:

- Dementia Basics
- Farm Safety and Dementia
- Improving Safety with Dementia
- Caregiving and Communication



Why It Matters:

Older agricultural workers face a higher risk of dementia, which can increase injury hazards on farms. Until now, there have been no programs tailored to the unique safety and caregiving challenges in agricultural settings. FFCD fills this gap by equipping families with practical strategies to keep loved ones safe and reduce caregiver stress.

Research Spotlight:

Developed by experts from the University of Iowa and University of Illinois Chicago, FFCD is supported by NIOSH and aims to improve safety and mental health outcomes for farm families. Participants will complete two short surveys and receive up to \$40, with an optional interview for an additional \$10.

Sign Up Today: <https://gpcah.public-health.uiowa.edu/dementia-educational/> or call 319-384-3817.

FFCD in the Media: [Iowa Public Radio \(September 2025\)](#); [AI Travis Show \(August 2025\)](#); [WRAM Radio Monmouth, IL \(June 2025\)](#); [Iowa Farmer Today \(June 2025\)](#)

PPE Resources for Safer Farming

by Jenn Patterson, MLitt, GPCAH Center Coordinator

Before starting any farm task, taking five minutes to assess hazards can prevent injuries and illnesses. Our **updated PPE Resources page** is designed to help farmers and agricultural workers choose the right protection from **head to toe**.

What's Inside the Updated Page?

- **Step-by-Step PPE Guidance**
Learn how to conduct a PPE hazard assessment and match hazards to the right protective gear.
- **Head-to-Toe Protection**
Detailed sections on head, eye, hearing, hand & arm, body, foot & leg, and respiratory protection.
- **Common Farm Hazards Explained**
From dusts and chemicals to confined spaces, noise, sun exposure, and working at heights.
- **Selection Tips & Certification Info**
Understand ANSI standards, glove material choices, and respirator requirements.
- **Printable Resources & Training Links**
Download rack cards, watch motion graphics, and access Ag Health 101 and other courses.

Proper PPE can reduce risks from chemical splashes, airborne dust, loud machinery, and more. Whether you're handling pesticides, entering a grain bin, or welding, this page gives you practical tools to stay safe.

Explore the updated PPE Resources page now at [PPE Resources](#).

Hearing Protection

When working in loud areas, even for short durations, hearing protection is recommended. Most people know about both earmuffs and earplugs, which are available at most hardware and farm stores. The goal of hearing protection is to reduce the sound level at the ear (inside the ear of the wearer) to below 85 dBA. Visit our page [here](#) for specifics on hearing protection use, selection, and guidance.

| FORMABLE EARPLUGS  | | EARMUFFS  | | PUSH-IN EARPLUGS  | |
|---|--|---|--|--|---|
| PROS | CONS | PROS | CONS | PROS | CONS |
|  Good protection |  Easy to lose |  Good protection |  May not fit well over glasses |  Low initial price |  Lower protection |
|  Lowest initial price |  Disposable |  Reusable |  Higher initial price |  Easy on/off |  Must have correct size |
|  Comfortable |  More time to insert |  Easy on/off |  Facial hair may affect fit |  Reusable |  Easy to lose |
|  Can be worn with glasses and earrings |  Requires clean hands for insertion |  Radio option allows you to listen to sports/music |  Uncomfortable in hot environment |  Use stem for quick and clean insertion |  Can become uncomfortable after long periods of time |

First Aid on the Farm

by Jenn Patterson, MLitt, GPCAH Center Coordinator

Accidents happen—even on the safest farms. Our updated **First Aid Resources page** provides practical tools to help you respond quickly and effectively when injuries occur.

What's Available?

- **Printable Posters & Flyers**
 - o *First Aid for Burns*: Covers thermal, chemical, and electrical burns with clear steps for treatment and signs of severity.
 - o *Farm First Aid Kits*: A checklist for building kits tailored to farm hazards—ideal for posting in barns, shops, and vehicles.
- **FarmSafe Podcast Episodes**
 - o *Farm Burn Basics*: Expert advice on fire safety and first aid for burns.
 - o *Burning Issues*: Tips for preventing fires and creating emergency plans.
- **Training Resources**
 - o Links to first aid and CPR courses through organizations like the **American Red Cross** and **National Safety Council**.
- **Extra Guidance**
 - o Recommendations for kit placement, stocking essentials, and proactive safety measures.

Why It Matters:

Quick access to first aid can save lives and reduce the severity of injuries. Make sure your farm is prepared—download posters, stock your kits, and share these resources with your team.

Explore the **First Aid Resources page** now: [First Aid Resources](#)

FIRST AID FOR BURNS 

GREAT PLAINS
Center for Agricultural Health 

THERMAL BURNS 
Caused by:
Hot liquids, steam, fire, other heat sources

CHEMICAL BURNS 
Caused by:
Acids, alkalis, or other corrosive substances

FIRST AID TREATMENT

- **Cool the Burn:** Immediately run cool (NOT cold) water over burn for several minutes or apply cool, wet compress.
- **Cover the Burn:** To protect the burn, use a sterile, non-fluffy dressing or a clean cloth.
- **Avoid Ice:** Never use ice, it can cause further damage to skin.
- **Pain Relief:** Can use over-the-counter medications (i.e., ibuprofen or acetaminophen).

FIRST AID TREATMENT

- **Remove the Chemical:** Quickly remove contaminated clothing, jewelry, or other items while avoiding additional contact with chemical.
- **Rinse and Clear:** Flush affected area with cool running water for 10-20 minutes minimum.
Note: Alkali burns may require longer flushing.
- **Seek Medical Help:** After rinsing, cover burn with a clean cloth and seek medical attention immediately.
Note: Over time, chemical burns can continue to damage tissue.

ELECTRICAL BURNS 
Caused by:
Exposure to electrical current

FIRST AID TREATMENT

- **Respond Safely:** Ensure source of electricity is turned off before touching the injured individual to avoid electrocution.
- **Call for Help:** Call emergency services immediately.
Note: Electrical burns often cause internal damage that is not visible.
- **Do Not Cool the Burn:** Cooling is not recommended for electrical burns, as it may complicate the assessment of internal injuries.
- **Cover the Burn:** Cover the burn with a clean, dry cloth until medical help arrives.

SIGNS & SYMPTOMS OF BURN SEVERITY

- 1 First-Degree Burns**
 - Redness
 - Pain
 - Swelling
 - No blisters
- 2 Second-Degree Burns**
 - Blisters
 - Redness & swelling
 - Pain
 - Wet/moist appearance
- 3 Third-Degree Burns**
 - Charred or white skin
 - Lack of pain
 - No blisters
 - Insensitivity to touch

GPCAH at the Iowa Ideas Conference 2025

by Jenn Patterson, MLitt, GPCAH Center Coordinator

The **Gazette's** Iowa Ideas Conference brought together experts, advocates, and community leaders for two days of insightful discussions on issues shaping Iowa's future. This free, statewide virtual event featured more than 50 sessions across tracks like Agriculture, Health Care, Education, Energy & Environment, and Community Development. Attendees explored innovative solutions, shared experiences, and connected on topics critical to Iowa's growth and well-being.

Highlights from the Agriculture Track One standout session, "Protecting the Health of Farmers," focused on the holistic well-being of those who feed our communities. Panelists, including our director Renee Anthony and researcher Kanika Arora, emphasized that farm safety extends beyond physical hazards in the field—it includes addressing mental health challenges, stress management, and access to resources. Experts in farm safety training, mental health professionals, and farmers shared strategies to make agriculture safer and more sustainable for future generations.



You can watch the full session here: [Protecting the Health of Farmers – Iowa Ideas Conference Replay](#)

Discover what GPCAH does to keep farmers safe

by Jenn Patterson, MLitt, GPCAH Center Coordinator

The **Great Plains Center for Agricultural Health (GPCAH)** is a nationally recognized resource dedicated to improving the health and safety of agricultural workers across nine Midwestern states. Founded in 1990, GPCAH combines research, education, and outreach to tackle critical hazards on farms.

What We Do:

- **Research:** Projects focus on reducing back pain from tractor use, preventing roadway crashes involving farm vehicles, improving air quality in swine buildings, and protecting older farmers with cognitive decline.
- **Innovation:** Developing new technologies and partnerships to address gaps in safety and health.
- **Education & Outreach:** Translating research into practical tools—like the Ag Health 101 course, FarmSafe podcast, and PPE education kits—to help farmers and advocates adopt best practices.
- **Impact:** Engaging thousands through social media, conferences, and training programs to spread evidence-based safety strategies.

Why It Matters: Agricultural workers face some of the highest rates of occupational injury and illness in the U.S. Our work informs stakeholders how to reduce these risks and improve well-being throughout the Midwest.

Learn More: Our latest Annual Report is now available at <https://gpcah.public-health.uiowa.edu/annual-reports/>.



NEWS AND UPDATES

2026 I-CASH Agricultural Youth Grants

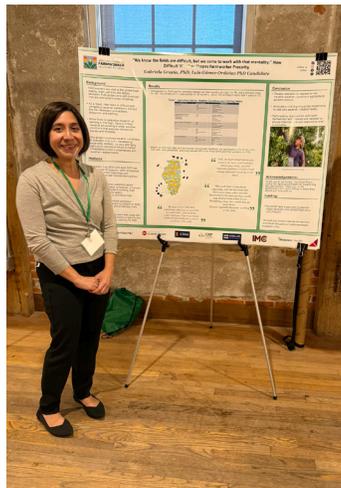
Applications for the 2026 I-CASH Agricultural Youth Grants will be available on the [I-CASH website](#) in January. Each year I-CASH provides funds for community grants to youth groups aimed at the prevention of farm-related injury. In addition, I-CASH awards an Outstanding Youth Grant (read about the 2025 award on page 4) and the winners are invited to present their project at the annual MRASH Conference. Past projects have included distributing safety supplies such as ear plugs and sunscreen, building farm safety hazard displays, and developing ag safety and health presentations. Grants are only available for youth groups and organizations in Iowa.

SAVE THE DATE - SHARP/ISASH Symposium 2026

The 8th Safety and Health in Agricultural and Rural Populations (SHARP) Symposium, hosted by the Canadian Centre for Rural and Agricultural Health (CCRHA) in partnership with the International Society for Agricultural Safety and Health (ISASH) and the Canadian Agricultural Safety Association (CASA) will be held June 15-18 in Saskatoon, SK, Canada. Visit the [symposium website](#) for details.

GPCAH Photo Highlight:

Gabriela Gracia, PhD, Research Assistant Professor in Environmental and Occupational Health Sciences at the University of Illinois Chicago presented her GPCAH pilot grant research at MRASH 2025. Her pilot project focused on learning farmworkers' and farm labor supervisors' perspectives regarding protective work clothing for heat safety.



Upcoming Events

January 9-10

Practical Farmers of Iowa Conference
Des Moines, IA

January 21-22

Iowa Pork Congress
Des Moines, IA

February 3-5

Midwest Ag Safety Conference
La Vista, NE

February 3-5

Iowa Ag Expo
Des Moines, IA

February 10-11

Minnesota Pork Congress
Mankato, MN

February 21-26

National FFA Week

February 19-21

Western Farm Show
Kansas City, MO

March 16-19

AgAbility National Training Workshop
Traverse City, MI

March 30 - April 3

Stand Up 4 Grain Safety Week

April 8-9

Public Health Conference of Iowa
Des Moines, IA

May 19-20

NRHA Annual Rural Health Conference
San Diego, CA

June 15-18

Safety and Health in Agricultural and Rural Populations (SHARP) Symposium
Saskatoon, SK, Canada



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