



# SUCCESS STORIES

## SUPPORTING AGRICULTURAL SAFETY AND HEALTH THROUGHTOUT THE LIFESPAN

Supporting the health and safety of people in a sustainable agriculture

### THE PROBLEM:

There are more older workers in agriculture than in any other industry, with the average age approaching 60. Without adequate support, the impacts of aging can make the hazardous environment of agricultural work even more dangerous.

### Impacts of Aging:

- Response time
- Vision
- Hearing



These impacts can become dangerous when working on the farm with hazards like:

- Pesticides
- Animals
- Driving

### OUR RESPONSE:

UMASH supports the agricultural workforce across the lifespan. Healthy farmers are critical to the economic development of rural communities, the security of agricultural work, the continuation of the world's food supply, and the maintenance of the environment.

## 1. WE CONSULTED THE COMMUNITY

We started by listening and partnering with the agricultural community and their support systems. Aging farmers and their communities participated in a survey and two regional community forums. We asked questions like:

**How, as a community, can we support the health and safety of aging farmers and farm families? What are the challenges? What are the opportunities?**

Participants identified the following health and safety priorities:

- Financial worries
- Balance and coordination problems
- Musculoskeletal and repetitive stress injuries
- Operating heavy machinery
- Fatigue and sleep issues
- Stress and anxiety
- Access to healthcare

[umash.umn.edu/aging-on-the-farm](http://umash.umn.edu/aging-on-the-farm)

## 2. WE PARTNERED TO IMPLEMENT COMMUNITY-BASED PROJECTS

After listening and collaborating, we leveraged UMASH's Emerging Issues program to partner with community organizations to fund the following innovative projects that will support healthy aging on the farm:

Parkinson's Disease support through at-home toolkits and healthcare



Training healthcare professionals to support and care for aging farmers



Supporting Alzheimer's dementia community caregivers



Closing gaps between the needs of aging farmers and existing resources through faith-based communities



## 3. WE CONTINUE THE CONVERSATION AND SHARE FREE RESOURCES

Based on our community-engaged work, UMASH developed and shared materials to raise awareness about protecting the wellbeing of aging farmers. **Scan the QR code to watch the video**



[umash.umn.edu/aging](http://umash.umn.edu/aging)

