



Aging on the Farm



THE PROBLEM

Agriculture is among the nation's most experienced workforces, with **1 in 3 U.S. farmers over 65 years old**. These farmers manage essential agricultural operations while navigating age-related health and safety challenges that impact their wellbeing and farm's sustainability.



OUR RESPONSE

Through collaborative partnerships and cost-effective community programs, UMASH has developed practical solutions that build on existing resources to support our aging agricultural workforce, creating sustainable impact across multiple states.

COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS FOR SUPPORTING AGING FARMERS IN THE UPPER MIDWEST

In partnership with UMASH, community organizations are addressing key challenges related to aging on the farm. From preventive health screenings to educational resources and driving safety programs, these ongoing community-based projects are helping farmers continue to live and work safely on their farms, while maintaining their health and well-being as they age.

- **Big Stone Area Memory Loss Connection** is addressing dementia in rural communities through virtual training and a safe driving module. The initiative aims to expand driving evaluation programs to **address aging, dementia, and safe driving challenges**, while helping individuals **stay active and engaged in their communities**.
- **The Hormel Institute** is collaborating with communities in rural Mower County, Minnesota to **increase access to preventative health screenings and services**. The mobile clinic initiative provides essential preventative health screenings, helping farmers maintain their health while reducing the burden on rural emergency services.
- **University of Minnesota Extension and North Dakota State University Extension** are creating and adapting educational resources for **aging farmers and their families**. The program is **developing a toolkit of print and digital materials**, including fact sheets, web articles, social media tools, and videos, to address **various aspects of aging on the farm** such as vision and hearing protection, fall prevention, assistive equipment pesticide safety and more.



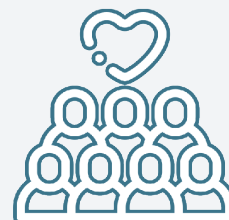
**COLLABORATIVE SOLUTIONS FOR HEALTHCARE ACCESS,
STRESS MANAGEMENT, AND SAFETY**

UMASH learned from aging farmers and their support systems that their biggest concerns about aging on the farm were **accessing healthcare, managing stress and anxiety, maintaining balance and coordination, and preventing musculoskeletal injuries**. UMASH responded to these concerns by partnering with four innovative teams in the Upper Midwest.

- Conducted essential research with **surveying farming communities**, revealing **97% intend to age on their farms**, identifying critical needs around mobility support, healthcare access, and daily task assistance.
- Piloted a **rural telehealth occupational therapy program** reaching farmers across Minnesota, with **80% reporting improved ability to manage age-related changes** and maintain farm operations (in partnership with University of Minnesota Occupational Therapy).



- Trained **120+ rural healthcare providers in dementia care** and strengthened local medical networks, **reducing specialist wait times from 6 - 9 months** through new referral partnerships.
- Offered **memory loss cafes** to raise dementia awareness reaching **215+ community members**, while **resource kits at local libraries** were **used 80+ times by farming families** (in partnership with Big Stone Area Memory Loss Connections).



These projects built sustainable community networks through partnerships with healthcare providers, faith organizations, libraries, and agricultural services - creating lasting infrastructure for rural aging support.



LEARN MORE AT
umash.umn.edu/aging