



Healthy & Safe Aging on the Farm

VIRTUAL UMASH FORUM

October 12, 2023, 9:30-11:30 am

Background: Over a third of U.S. farmers are older than 65.^{1,2} Farmers tend to work longer into older adulthood than in other fields due to factors like cultural norms and economic necessity.¹ Like many, farmers often desire to “age in place” or stay in their homes as they age.³⁻⁷ However, without support, the physical changes of aging - in vision, hearing, memory, and mobility - can make farm life more difficult.^{9,10} Additionally, a lifetime of exposure to the agricultural work environment, including chemical hazards like pesticides or physical hazards like noisy machinery, can lead to adverse health effects that may exacerbate the effects of “normal” aging.^{8,9,11} Thus, aging agricultural populations experience more occupational health and safety concerns, like injuries and illnesses.^{1,9,11} They may also experience physical, geographical, and financial barriers to accessing care.^{7,8,12,13} Additionally, mental health concerns among all farmers are common.¹⁴⁻¹⁷ Older farmers may also experience additional stressors, like shifts in their capacity to work, decisions about farm transitions, and challenges related to finances and health.^{8,18,19} These challenges can certainly be intensified among those with marginalized racial identities, lower education levels, and other socioeconomic factors.²⁰

On October 12, 2023, join the Upper Midwest Agricultural Safety and Health (UMASH) Center for an engaging virtual forum bringing together individuals and groups committed to the well-being of farmers as they age. Building upon conversations from [regional forums in 2020](#), UMASH has partnered with innovative teams in the Upper Midwest, including [successful initiatives](#) like:

- Virtual occupational therapy for farmers to enhance mobility and daily life
- Faith-based collaborations that understand farmers' needs for aging in place
- Tailored support for Parkinson's Disease through at-home resources and telehealth
- Community-wide programs elevating dementia care quality and awareness

UMASH and the Center for Healthy Aging and Innovation (CHAI) are excited to gather both familiar and new partners across diverse fields and expertise including farmers, experts on aging, ag health and safety professionals, occupational therapists, health practitioners, social workers, veterinarians, and more. We invite anyone interested to join the dialogue and collaborate on solutions toward healthy and safe aging in agriculture.

What to Expect:

- **Information-Sharing:** A grounding presentation will outline foundational knowledge, past project successes, and lessons learned.
- **Panel Discussion and Q&A:** Engage with UMASH's successful aging partners in a lively panel discussion and interactive Q&A session.
- **Engagement & Networking:** Connect with others using interactive polling to brainstorm and discuss in a stress-free manner.

Forum Objectives:

1. **Gain knowledge and understanding** about aging farmers' specific health and safety experiences, including occupational health risks and the impact of the agricultural work environment.
2. **Connect with others invested in supporting the health and safety of farmers as they age,** fostering a network of potential collaborators.
3. **Drive impactful solutions** through facilitated discussions of opportunities and strategies for future collaboration, research, and initiatives.

Register to Participate: z.umn.edu/SafeAgingOnTheFarm



Upper Midwest
Agricultural Safety
and Health Center

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