

## Views from VanDeWalle

Brandy VanDeWalle, Extension Educator in Fillmore County

February 28, 2024

### Emergency Preparedness Workshop Series for Rural Families

An upcoming four-part extension workshop for women in agriculture will focus on emergency preparedness for rural families. The program will be a four-part series, held at numerous locations across Nebraska and Indiana. The series will focus on farm and ranch emergency management, first aid, fire protection and hazardous materials. Workshops will be held from 5:30 to 8:30 p.m. Central time on March 5, 7, 12 and 14.

The program is a collaboration between extension women in agriculture programs at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln and Purdue University. According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, agricultural occupations have high rates of work-related injuries and deaths. While not all emergencies result in bodily injury or death, they also may cost rural families in other ways. "Women play a critical role in ensuring the safety of their homes and rural communities," said Jessica Groskopf, director of the Nebraska Women in Agriculture program. "In many farm and ranch families, safety is an important topic, but it sometimes gets overlooked because it does not directly impact profitability."

Each state's workshop sites will be hosted by local extension personnel. Keynote speakers will be simulcast to each location, and each site will provide additional speakers and hands-on activities. Dinner will be included.

Groskopf said the program's structure is intended to strengthen networks of women in rural areas, which can provide opportunities for building trust and sharing information. "Connections are so important to rural women," she said. "We have seen the benefits that come from knowing your peers, having a place to share difficulties, and mitigate the isolation that so many of us in agriculture often feel."

The workshops seek to help participants initiate preventative practices, set up a plan to deal with emergencies before they occur and be more comfortable reacting to emergency situations. There is a registration fee of \$50 per person before Tuesday, Feb. 20. The fee increases to \$60 per person after Feb. 20. Participants should plan to attend each session. A virtual option is available for those unable to attend a workshop site, although in-person attendance is highly encouraged to better network with other attendees and interact with speakers. The virtual registration fee is \$75 before Feb. 20, and \$80 after Feb. 20. Registration may be completed on the [Nebraska Women in Agriculture website](#).

*This project was supported by a grant from NCRCD through funding from USDA NIFA Award #2022-51150-38141.*

### Nebraska Workshop Sites

- Beatrice — Beatrice Fire and Rescue, 300 S. Sixth St.
- Concord — Haskell Ag Lab, 57905 866 Rd.
- Grand Island — Raising Nebraska, 501 E. Fonner Park Rd., Suite 100
- O'Neill — Holt County Courthouse Annex, 128 N. Sixth St.



- Weeping Water — Nebraska Extension in Cass County, 8400 144th St., Suite 100