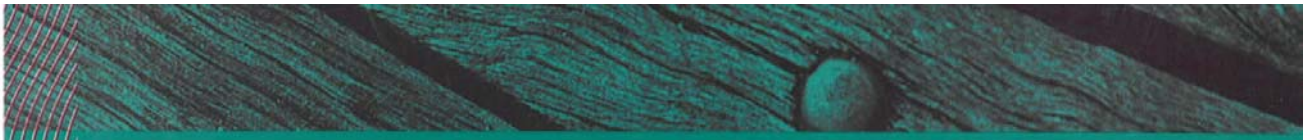

Conducting Agricultural Worksite Assessments

a guide for those providing worksite assessments for farmers and agricultural workers with physical disabilities

AUSTRALIAN CENTRE FOR AGRICULTURAL HEALTH AND SAFETY

Conducting Agricultural Worksite Assessments

A Guide for Those Providing Worksite
Assessments for Farmers and Agricultural Workers
with Physical Disabilities

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DISCLAIMER

The Australian Centre for Agricultural Health and Safety, and Purdue University do not endorse, recommend or certify any of the techniques, products, or modifications described in this publication as being safe or effective in solving a particular problem. Every individual with a disability has unique needs and various levels of abilities. Consequently the potential hazards associated with each workplace modification or anticipated activity should be carefully assessed and eliminated where possible. Where specific hazards cannot be removed, they should be appropriately guarded against inadvertent contact. Appropriate warnings should be used where needed and operator instructions provided.

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

Purpose

The purpose of ***Conducting Agricultural Worksite Assessments*** is to provide rehabilitation service providers with a guide for conducting worksite assessments for farmers and farm workers with physical disabilities. Throughout the assessment, professionals gain experience in the specific needs of the farming community while gathering and recording information relevant to the rehabilitation process of their clients. The guide also offers the interviewer the original form, which can be used as is or modified to suit local conditions and individual preferences. In addition, supplementary information is provided for identifying clients, maintaining client files and finding additional resources.

It has become increasingly clear to the authors that no one approach or tool will satisfy every need. Users are encouraged to consider the information and tool as suggestions and to feel free to modify it as needed. The desired outcome is that the professionals using the material will be better equipped to assist farmers and farm workers in making their own decisions concerning their chosen occupation of farming.

Background

In the United States during 1988, the Breaking New Ground Resource Centre; Purdue University, in conjunction with the Easter Seal Society of Iowa's Farm Family Rehabilitation Management (FARM) Program, developed an agricultural worksite assessment tool. The assessment tool was developed for use by rural rehabilitation professionals to assist in conducting on-site assessments. The original tool was designed to provide the professional who might be unfamiliar with agriculture, with a guide to complete an effective assessment, assistance in identifying potential workplace barriers and a means for reviewing progress towards completing worksite modifications.

The agricultural industries throughout Australia and the United States have many similarities. One of the most disturbing is the fact that the agricultural industry is one of the most dangerous in both countries. There is a high incidence of injuries and deaths in agriculture in both Australia and the United States, and the resulting occurrence of disabilities is estimated to correlate with this high injury rate. A second similarity is the type of agricultural commodities produced in each country. In the United States, common commodity groups include beef, grain, and dairy which are also common in Australian agriculture. The agricultural production techniques are similar, in both countries, and thus carry similar risks and therefore result in similar injuries.

More is becoming known about the nature and extent of disabilities in Australian farmers and farm workers, however data collection remains difficult as no one database in Australia contains information specifically about farmers farm workers injury rate. Conservative estimates however place the number of new disabling and severe work related farm injuries occurring in the order of 5,000 per annum. Disabilities in both the United States and Australia include not only the more serious disabilities such as, amputations of limbs and digits, head and spinal cord injuries, but also a wide range of other disabling conditions such as low vision, noise induced hearing loss, arthritis, respiratory and cardiac conditions, degenerative disorders, and chronic back pain.

The contents included in **Conducting Agricultural Worksite Assessments** are in no way intended to become the final say or "only approach" to conducting farm worksite assessments. The assessment tool reflects the experience gained by two programs in the

United States providing services to this unique and sometimes difficult-to-serve population. It is hoped that this publication will be especially useful to new rehabilitation professionals working within the rural areas. The loose-leaf format is intended to allow for additions and modifications to the contents as experience is gained.

Role of the Worksite Assessment

As part of any return to work rehabilitation program a worksite assessment is conducted to determine the personal requirements for satisfactory participation in chosen occupations for the individual. The assessment can take many forms, one of these being the vocational assessment of the disabled worker. The rehabilitation worker aims to develop a clearer understanding of the problem, resources available, and strategies necessary to alleviate problems.

The assessment of the vocational ability of a farmer or farm worker with a physical disability centres around their workplace - the farm - and as such, conducting an assessment of the workplace and evaluating the farmer's ability to complete required activities is essential. Outcomes of the farm worksite assessment will include:

1. Increased understanding of the size and nature of the farming operation and the individual's role in it, including the potential for alternative enterprises.
2. Identification of significant workplace barriers and functional limitations that prevent completion of required activities.
3. The opportunity to discuss possible worksite modifications, task restructuring or the reassignment of certain activities to other family members or employees.
4. The opportunity to jointly identify goals aimed at helping the farmer increase independence, productivity and profitability.
5. To establish liaison between the rehabilitation professional and the farmer/farm worker and their family.

To assist in the rehabilitation and return to work of an injured farmer or farm worker an understanding of farming and farm work practises is required by the rehabilitation service provider. This will ensure that the service provided is the most effective and of the highest possible quality. The assessment tool will provide the rehabilitation worker with a clear abd detailed format to follow when conducting farm worksite assessments.

It should be noted that not every farmer with a disability needs a comprehensive worksite assessment. In some cases, the need is very specific and the solution can be provided without conducting a full assessment. The rehabilitation provider is encouraged to conduct a mental assessment while visiting the client and raise questions concerning other activities that may eventually require modifications or use of assistive technology. As the severity level of the disability increases, so does the need for a more comprehensive assessment.

Role of the Assessment Tool

Rehabilitation professionals have used various types of assessment tools for many years. They provide valuable information on the rehabilitation needs of the individual and are instrumental in developing plans to meet these needs.

Existing assessment tools may not uncover the special needs of the farmer/farm worker with a disability. Furthermore, many rehabilitation providers are unfamiliar with the agricultural worksite and its particular challenges or with the resources available to help clients to

continue to participate in their farm operations. In other words, they may not have the experience to ask the right questions to uncover potential workplace problems. This lack of information can lead to delays in returning to work, unsafe modifications, inappropriate solutions and frustration for all involved.

The purpose of using an assessment tool is to provide a standardised method of gathering and recording information about the client's workplace and needs in performing essential tasks. Once completed, the assessment tool becomes a part of the client's file along with other records and is updated when needed. If kept up-to-date and reviewed periodically, the assessment tool will also enable a record to be kept of the client's progress towards elimination of major worksite barriers and increased independence.

CONDUCTING THE ASSESSMENT

Identifying Clients

In order to conduct agricultural worksite assessments, you need farmers and farm workers who perceive the need for such an assessment and are willing to participate in the process. Barriers to this process and the benefits it can achieve include fierce independence on the part of many rural people and the scepticism that many have towards urban professionals.

One of the most successful techniques used to identify potential clients in Australia has been through public awareness activities at agricultural related events such as farm machinery shows, agricultural field days, and farm organisation meetings. Experience has shown that participation in these events, where large numbers of rural people gather, will almost always result in a question concerning a disability issue. An attractive display that reflects clearly the abilities of individuals with disabilities or demonstrates an unusual type of assistive technology, such as a tractor equipped with a lift and hand controls, will generate considerable interest and open the door to specific questions.

For a variety of reasons, many farmers with disabilities may be reluctant to approach an exhibit that focuses on disability awareness but often will follow-up later indirectly by means of a phone call, an email or letter, or contact with the local exhibitor or sponsor of the event.

The rural media can also be an effective means to get the word out concerning the availability of specific services for farm families. A series of well-designed media releases and stories that feature a farmer with a disability can encourage others to initiate a contact for services (concerning the use of the media, as with all public awareness activities, care should be exercised to ensure that individuals with disabilities are always presented in a positive manner and are not used to bring sensation to a story through negative means.)

Nothing speaks louder for a program than the quality of service provided to the customers. The most important sources of referrals for the AgrAbility Australia network of injured farmers has been from the clients. What often develops from this form of referral are geographic clusters of clients that knew each other previously or got to know each other through involvement with the program.

Rural professionals are also a potential source of referrals once they become aware of your services and become convinced of your credibility. Informational mailings to rural hospitals, physicians, physiotherapists, occupational therapists, public health nurses, social workers, and vocational rehabilitation counsellors can begin a flow of referrals.

Disability-related organisations such as the Australian Arthritis Foundation, Royal Blind Society, and Paraquad, can also be important sources for referrals. Many of these organisations have regular newsletters, which are broadly disseminated and reach both urban and rural populations.

Rural public libraries should also be on your mailing list. Nearly every rural community has a public library of some sort and can become a channel to reach rural residents with disabilities. A program brochure to each library in your state with an encouragement to post on their community service bulletin board will result in follow-up contacts.

The Initial Contact

Experience suggests that the initial contact usually comes about in one of four ways:

- A referral from primary rehabilitation provider.
- Direct contact from a consumer seeking assistance with a disability-related problem.
- A referral from a third-party who acts as a "go-between." For example a family member or friend.
- Contact initiated upon hearing about, or meeting an individual who could benefit from the services being provided.

Forms have developed for initial contacts; these forms can be found under the section on Maintaining Client Records. These forms provide a means of collecting pertinent information during the initial contact and ensure that someone does not fall through the cracks.

As early as possible, a farm visit should be scheduled if an assessment is considered necessary. Even though one may think that most farmers "work at home" and are always "somewhere close by," it is not advisable to just drop in on a farmer unannounced, especially on the first visit.

An initial phone call should precede the visit. By telephoning ahead, you can begin to establish rapport in an informal way. This contact also allows you to obtain background information about the farmer's disability, size and type of farm operation, directions to the farm, and any other professionals who might be involved in providing assistance, such as a vocational rehabilitation counsellor.

If you have difficulty in reaching the individual by phone, fax or email the initial contact can be through the mail. This initial mailing might include a cover letter and a description of services provided. A request for a written response may be slow in coming so follow-up attempts to call should be made. Keep in mind that a letter typed on agency stationery (no matter how friendly you make it) may be intimidating and sets a much different tone than a personal call. A letter may seem too formal or authoritative to some farm families. Of course, if the farmer doesn't have a telephone, you'll need to do all of the communicating via mail, in which case, it is best to make your letters as personal and full of pertinent information as possible. It may also take a little more planning on your part to communicate by mail so that you are sure to get all the information covered in your letters.

The On-Site Visit

By now you've contacted the farmer to set up a time for your initial visit (make every effort to be punctual). You should also have detailed directions of how to get to the farm, and an agenda in mind for what you want to accomplish during your first visit.

Once you get there, introduce yourself and begin to develop some rapport with the farmer (and others who may be present). Talk about other things for a while the dog, the weather, your drive out, lovely house, nice yard, etc. When these conversations begin to lag, it's time to start discussing the farmer's specific concerns about farming with a disability. At this point, you can either sit down and talk, or tour the farm with the farmer while you talk - whichever the farmer wants. Try to let the farmer "lead" or "take control" of the visit. If this doesn't happen, you'll need to initiate discussion. Either way, start with the farmer's disability and focus on those tasks that **can** be done. Discuss the farm, what problems there are, and what the farmer perceives his/her needs to be. Delicately discuss the farm's financial situation and the extent of modifications the farmer wants or can afford to make. Respect the farmer's wishes if he/she doesn't want the most expensive, high-tech modifications available, even if you think they are necessary and affordable. Don't expect answers to all of your

questions. An element of trust needs to develop before many topics will be freely discussed especially financial matters (listening at this stage is far more important than talking).

Always ask the farmer if you can take notes of the conversation, but remember that eye contact, listening and understanding are much more important than getting every detail on paper. You can always contact the farmer after your visit if you need more information. Be sure the farmer also knows that the purpose for your note taking is only to help you remember the details of your visit. Your notes will help determine modifications to be made and services to be offered. Make sure you inform the farmer that any information they give you will be strictly confidential and will not be released to any person or agency outside your organisation.

Even though taping interviews is becoming more common, you need to carefully weigh the pros and cons of tape recording farm visits. It may make it easier for you to gather information, but chances are the farmer will feel much more intimidated and less willing to disclose personal information.

Tips for On-Site Visits

When you visit a farm remember that you are a guest and that certain unwritten rules may exist and should be respected. For example:

- Farm families are busy people. Every farm visit should be preceded with a telephone call to schedule a precise time for the visit. Don't be surprised if, when you show up at a busy time, animals take priority over your visit.
- The farm dog that greets you may serve a useful purpose by letting the family know that a stranger has arrived, and may even keep you cornered in the car until a family member approaches. Always treat any farm dogs with respect. Also don't pat the dog, you may be distracting it from its job, which the farmers is relying on it to do.
- Never comment on the odour. What might smell bad to you directly relates to the family's livelihood.
- Because mud and manure are simply a part of agricultural production, some farm families leave their shoes or boots at the back door or in a designated "mud room". Offer to do the same or follow the family's example.
- All manure is not alike. Many livestock producers are particular about whose manure is tracked onto their farm. Manure carries diseases and parasites, and you should take every precaution to avoid being a transporter. An inexpensive pair of rubber boots that can be rinsed off and sanitised with bleach following each visit should be acquired if several farm visits are to be made.
- On some farms certain areas or buildings are off limits to strangers, as the farmer cannot risk exposing young or breeding livestock to any diseases or parasites that you might be carrying. If the sign on the door says "Keep Out" or if your client tells you to stay out, respect his or her wishes.
- Avoid overextending your welcome. Several short visits, if resources allow, along with telephone contacts are much more effective than a single long visit.
- Leave the gate as you found it.

Keeping in Contact

The tasks performed in farm operations vary with the season. Work done on a cotton farm in the spring, for example, is quite different from that done in the winter. Unless a rehabilitation professional is familiar with various agricultural enterprises, he or she cannot carry out a comprehensive assessment during one on-site visit. Seasonal assessments may help you and your client establish a set of rehabilitation goals and objectives for each season.

You should also consider any variations in the methods or technology that your client uses to complete specific tasks. For example, a farmer might apply a herbicide to a crop one year and cultivate it the next to control weeds. A new piece of major equipment or the implementation of a new method calls for new or additional modifications. The decision to store hay in large round bales, for instance, requires changes in the equipment and tasks associated with harvesting, transporting, and storing the hay. Be sure to inquire about any farm operation changes in progress or those being planned to avoid recommending a modification that will soon become obsolete or need major changes.

Safety Information

Agricultural production is the third most dangerous occupation in Australia. All agricultural workplaces contain numerous hazards to the workers, family members and visitors. To help reduce the potential for injury, carefully review the following precautions.

- Visitors account for about five percent of agricultural workplace accidents. Care should be taken throughout the on-site visit to avoid injury. Never explore the farm unless accompanied by the owner or operators.
- Avoid becoming an "extra rider" on agricultural equipment even if it appears to be a good place to conduct an interview. Most machines used on farms are designed for one operator. Extra riders who fall from machines during operation account for a significant proportion of serious farm injuries.
- Be sure to, in a delicate way, make the farmer/farm worker aware of potential workplace hazards they may not have considered. These may be general or specifically arising from the client's disability.
- In no case should you recommend that a clearly hazardous technique or device be used to accommodate the needs or limitations of your client. A modification that exposes the user to more risk than was originally associated with the technique or device is inappropriate.
- If you are not sure whether or not a modification might present a hazard to your client, consult a safety professional or engineer.

For further information on agricultural health and safety contact:

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THE ASSESSMENT TOOL

The following section contains the Australian version of the original assessment tool with detailed explanations of the questions in the form of a user's guide.

User's Guide for the Agricultural Worksite Assessment Tool

This version of the assessment tool is the most comprehensive and takes about two hours to complete under most circumstances, if done in one visit. Many of the questions require only short responses while additional space is provided following the remaining questions to enable you to include narrative or descriptive information. Experience suggests that attempting to complete such a thorough assessment in one visit may not be the most effective approach. Many items can be completed through the initial telephone contact and follow-up visits.

The assessment tool is divided into the following 14 sections:

1. Personal Data
2. General Farm Data
3. Overall Farm Accessibility
4. General Farm Maintenance
5. Farm Chemicals
6. Equipment and Machinery
7. Water Supply
8. Crop Handling and Storage (including Fruit, Vegetables, and Grapes)
9. Sheep, Cattle and Other Livestock Production
10. Domestic Farm Animals
11. Home Garden and Orchard (including woodlot)
12. Farm Management Activities
13. Additional Vocational Skills
14. Establishing Primary Goals

Remember the assessment tool is not intended to identify **all** potential needs. It should be used in conjunction with other rehabilitation assessment tools addressing independent living, health care, transportation, dietary needs, financial assistance, medical management, disability adjustment, and family counselling needs.

The user's guide section is designed to correspond with and elaborate upon the questions in the assessment tool. It might be useful to set a copy of the actual assessment tool alongside the text as you review the explanation of each question.

1. Personal Data

State/town. Knowing the state/town in which your client resides is useful when making referrals to other agencies for services. A client may live in a different state/town than his or her mailing address would indicate.

Spouse/Partner's name. The spouse/partner is usually the primary support person, and you will probably carry on a great deal of communication with and through the spouse/partner. Also, getting to know your client and spouse/partner on a first-name basis helps to improve communication.

Children. Children are an excellent indicator of the general health of the family unit. Getting to know them and involving them in the rehabilitation process will usually prove very fruitful.

Social supports: Knowing the client's level of social support will aid when trying to implement changes that require considerable adaptation on their part.

Directions. Locating individuals in rural areas can be difficult. Record a descriptive set of directions to the farm for future reference. Always carry a map of the area in your car. Local government councils will generally be able to supply a shire map indicating properties which can be quite useful when travelling to a property unknown to the rehabilitation worker.

Disability. Describe the nature of the client's disability as specifically as possible. Be sure to include the less obvious disabilities such as a respiratory condition, hearing impairment or high blood pressure.

Cause of Disability. In some cases the cause of disability would prove to be useful information especially if it is health-related. People may not always be comfortable with discussing the cause if it was related to an accident. This is especially true if there is ongoing litigation.

Functional Limitations. Specific information regarding the functional limitations of the client will help you better understand why certain work-related tasks are difficult to perform. If possible, efforts should be made to obtain detailed information on the level of functional limitation, such as the level of hearing loss, visual acuity/degrees of field of vision, actual lifting limits, range of motion, and specific limitations on standing, sitting, bending, stooping, balance, etc.

Occupation. It is important to understand what position your client holds with respect to the agricultural operation. If the client is a farm employee, any potential site modifications or task restructuring must be discussed with the employer. If the client works full time and receives his or her primary income from the farm, then you should focus on the alterations necessary to allow the client to continue working full time. If the client works only part time on the farm and holds an off-farm job, the need to complete certain farm worksite modifications might not be as urgent.

2. General Farm Data

A. Type and size of operation

To establish priorities in completing necessary modifications, you must first understand what the primary farm activities are and how much time and resources are committed to each. If, for example, a farmer has a few chickens, 150 head of beef cattle, and 200 hectares of grain, the primary activities would probably involve work related to grain production. Other family members could be encouraged to assist with the secondary activities - in this case, handling the livestock and feeding the chooks - so that major worksite modifications needed to handle the field work could be completed first. If the client is involved with a farm-based agribusiness such as marketing, operating a

roadside vegetable market or repairing agricultural equipment, these activities should be noted. In some cases, it might be possible to expand them to replace other activities, which may prove too costly or impractical to modify.

B. Summary of farm responsibilities

Understanding the work-related activities that your client participated in before acquiring their disability can help you determine which tasks he or she might still wish to perform, which tasks need to be modified and which could be assigned to family members or co-workers. Space does not allow you to identify every task. Focus on the primary responsibilities.

C. Family members and co-workers who assist on the farm

Information on how the farm operation is currently run and the allocation of responsibilities is needed to develop a job restructuring plan. Often the client could assume another worker's tasks and allow that worker to take over those responsibilities he or she can no longer perform. Job restructuring can be very painful in some circumstances where more than one generation of the family is involved. Anticipate that there will be reluctance to change roles that have become traditional or institutionalised by the family, and that lengthy adjustment periods could be needed.

Disabilities have an impact on the entire family, especially younger children. They are often required to take on a more significant role in operating the farm and completing domestic tasks. Consideration of worksite modifications, job restructuring and re-allocation of responsibilities should include discussion of the potential influence such changes could have on the children. It is realistic to assume that the stress on the children will increase. Efforts should be made to avoid detrimental decisions such as keeping children home from school to work, requiring them to become responsible for activities that require mature judgement, or placing them in situations that expose them to high risk of personal injury.

3. Overall Farm Accessibility

A. Type of terrain

Terrain may vary significantly from one farm to another. It may be rocky, sandy, flat, hilly, undulating, or wooded. Knowing the terrain on which a farm lies can help you identify potential problems for clients with mobility or visual impairments, which will guide the determination of types of adaptive equipment or techniques that will give the client the greatest freedom of movement around the operation. For example, steep driveways present problems for wheelchair users especially during transfers in and out of vehicles. Timbered or hilly areas may limit the crop or livestock options and present special hazards when using modified equipment.

B. Farmyard surfaces and drainage

Muddy worksites can present serious problems to clients who must use wheelchairs or lower-limb prostheses. Paved walkways and work areas provide better walking surfaces and easier manoeuvring for a wheelchair. In many cases, installing drains or re-landscaping farmyards can divert water away from the worksite. The application of a layer of gravel or shale can greatly improve working surfaces and mobility. All Terrain

Vehicles (ATV's) have been successfully used to overcome mobility problems in muddy farmyards and fields.

C. Roads

Roads have an impact on the accessibility of the farm and well maintained roads (including stock grids and ramps) improve access to any property. Knowing the condition of the most frequently used roads can help the rehabilitation provider to anticipate potential access problems.

4. General Farm Maintenance

A. The workshop

The workshop is one of the most important buildings on a farm. It is where much of the activity of farming takes place. The farm office may be located there and at times the workshop serves as a haven for the farmer when things are not going well. Improving the accessibility of the workshop can have a positive "rippling effect" on many other aspects of the operation.

1. Often the workshop is inaccessible because of the overall design, number of tools or clutter, or location of the building. Entrance barriers such as steps and narrow or heavy doors can be modified by installing ramps and various types of manual or automatic door openers.
2. A smooth concrete floor provides a solid work area for large equipment and improves mobility. Where concrete is not feasible because of cost, alternative materials such as gravel, shale or packed clay could be considered.
3. The layout of the various tools and equipment might also make accessibility difficult. The layout can usually be modified easily by placing tools and equipment within reach and leaving ample work space around each. Pegboards, shelves, and power points can be lowered to allow easy access for individuals in a wheelchair. Overhead drop cords for electricity and compressed air hoses will eliminate the tangle of lines on the floor and are generally safer.
4. Tool benches and fixed equipment such as vices and drill presses may also have to be lowered. Power points installed on the front of benches can reduce the need for stretching to reach them. Toolbox's can be retrofitted with wheels or purchased with wheels already mounted to them, which allows tools to be easily brought to the job site thereby avoiding unnecessary trips or lifting.
5. In warmer areas of Australia, ventilation of the workshop is very important during the summer months. Adequate ventilation allows heat and hazardous fumes to escape the workshop and improves the comfort level of the farmer working within the workshop. Similarly in colder climates, a heated workshop provides the farmer with the opportunity to work year-round in the facility, completing essential machinery maintenance tasks during the off-season. A heated workshop can also provide a workplace in which he or she could pursue other income-generating, on-site vocational activities such as small engine repair, woodworking, small-scale fabrication, and welding services.

   If the workshop is often used by the farmer, serious consideration should be given to installing a toilet and wash facilities. A telephone and/or 2-way radio communication to the workshop, if they don't already exist, should also be high on the priority list of needed modifications.

Good lighting and adequate ventilation improve both the safety and productivity of the worker. If the farmer has a respiratory impairment, dust collection systems can be installed on dust-generating equipment such as table saws and sanders. Special attention should be given to welding areas to ensure that fumes are ventilated to the outside.

B. Basic hand tools

Hand tools are essential for the completion of numerous jobs around the farm. The inability to use basic tools can present numerous obstacles, especially with respect to the maintenance of equipment and buildings. Over the years, many labour saving tools, such as vice-grips, automatic screwdrivers, nail guns, and one-handed grease guns have become commercially available. Most were designed for the able-bodied user who wanted to simplify a task or make it less physically strenuous. With a little ingenuity almost any tool can be modified to accommodate a user with an arm amputation or hand injury. In many cases these modifications can be made by the client using presently owned tools and materials.

C. Power tools

Power tools have also been successfully modified for individuals with arm and hand injuries. However, every precaution should be taken to ensure that the modified tool does not present an added risk to the user. In other words, no modified tools should be more hazardous to use than it was to use as originally designed. This is especially true for tools that cut or grind such as high speed power saws and grinders. The client should always be encouraged to wear the necessary eye and ear protection when using impact tools such as hammers, chisels or power tools. In cases such as welding, special protective clothing is needed to prevent burns. This is especially true with injuries and resulting disabilities where loss of feeling is involved.

The use of air impact tools, widely found in service stations, can replace various manual tools, which require considerable physical exertion. Air tools have been designed to replace wrenches and saws, and to convert a hammer and chisel operation into a one-handed activity.

D. Maintenance materials

Various maintenance materials might be difficult to manipulate for a client who has a hand injury or who wears a prosthetic device. Magnetic nail and staple holders can be used by prosthesis wearers. Tool holders are also available for individuals with carpal tunnel syndrome. Sandpaper can be mounted to a block of wood affixed with a handle for those who can use only one hand. Jigs, fixtures, and clamps can be used to hold materials in place while performing maintenance activities. The use of spray paint can reduce the effort of painting and eliminate the messy clean up that accompanies painting with a brush. Grease purchased in pre-packaged cartridges makes lubricating equipment easier and less messy. Staple guns and electric nailing guns can nearly eliminate the need to individually handle nails and other fasteners.

5. Farm Chemicals

A. Farm chemicals are dangerous. They should be stored in a lockable room or cabinet in their original containers and be in an isolated area away from the farmhouse.

B. Personal protective equipment including overalls, gloves, face shields, breathing masks, water resistant boots, aprons, waterproof gloves should be available and used when handling chemicals. They are designed to reduce the risk of injury from chemical spills and as such should be adhered to.

C. Proper disposal of chemical containers can decrease the risk of accidental poisoning's and contamination of the environment.

D. Chemicals are expensive as well as dangerous and spills place the farmer at risk of exposure to the chemical as well as wasting expensive resources. Assistive devices are available, which decrease the risk of spills such as the "Tilt-a-drum" chemical dispenser.

6. Equipment and Machinery

A. Machinery storage area

1. Machines that are stored indoors last longer, require fewer repairs, look better, and are easier to work on. A machine that has been stored indoors or undercover generally brings a higher resale value. A well-designed storage area also doubles as a garage for servicing machines.
2. A problem frequently encountered by farmers with mobility problems in accessing machine sheds is opening and closing large sliding or overhead doors. Automatic door openers can be installed or a pulley system can be contrived to allow the operator to pull on a vertical rope rather than pushing or pulling on a sliding door.
3. A smooth floor in machinery storage areas can make working on equipment much easier. In most cases a firmly packed clay or dirt surface is sufficient. However, if resources allow, a floor of gravel, shale or concrete provides an ideal surface.
4. For many farmers, the cost of providing indoor storage for all equipment is prohibitive. Where a choice needs to be made, equipment with the greatest value and most frequent use should be kept under cover.
5. Positioning machinery in the storage area in an organised fashion can help the farmer with a mobility impairment to access the operator station or perform maintenance tasks on equipment more easily. Hitching can also be accomplished more easily in a storage area with a smooth floor than in the yard or paddock.

B. Primary power units

Farmers use a wide variety of makes and models of motorised/self-propelled equipment. It is not unusual for a farm to have three or more tractors and headers in use. The farmer may spend long hours operating this equipment, and in most cases, operating this equipment is almost essential to the successful continuation of farming.

It is important to know which of these machines your client uses most often. Older machines can be modified, but modifications should be completed first on the newer and more frequently used machines.

Knowing whether or not the equipment is cab-equipped can help you decide what modifications need to be made. A modern pressurised, heated and air-conditioned cab is important for individuals with respiratory impairments, spinal cord injuries, and

temperature sensitivity. Two-way radios are recommended for individuals with mobility impairments to ensure that they can obtain help if needed. On larger farm operations, these radios are no longer considered accessories but essential and cost-cutting management tools.

C. Accessing equipment

During the assessment process, you should gather as much information as possible about the specific problems your client faces in accessing the most essential and frequently used machines. Take photographs of those pieces of equipment that might be considered for modifications. CRS Australia, formerly known as the Commonwealth Rehabilitation Service, the Australian Centre for Agricultural Health and Safety and the AgrAbility Australia Resource Centre have resource publications that can assist in the selection and fabrication of the necessary modifications.

For clients with less severe mobility limitations, the modifications might be as simple as additional handrails or steps, steps moved closer together, wider steps, or even alternative climbing methods. Modifications to steps should include non-slip surfaces to provide sure footing. For individuals with severe walking limitations, platform lifts and chairlifts have been designed which can be mounted to the tractor or combine. Record the equipment make and model; note the number and position of cab doors; any side-mounted implements or chemical tanks used; and other characteristics of the machine you feel might be useful. This will help identify difficulties in mounting and operating the machines, so that you can begin to work toward solutions. If possible, observe the client as he or she transfers on and off the equipment and operates it. Note potential hazards and make their correction a priority. Again, modifications should not increase the risk of injury even if the desired modification is considered essential by the client.

D. Equipment seating

Some equipment seating may not be padded adequately for a farmer who has a spinal cord injury. Additional padding or wheelchair seat cushions can be added. For clients with back injuries, the seating may not have adequate shock absorption. In this case installing a seat with better suspension may benefit the client. Armrests can also reduce pressure on the lower spine. Some seat designs include independent hydraulic or pneumatic suspension, lumbar and height adjustment controls, and adjustable armrests.

E. Controls

For tractors and self-propelled equipment used most frequently, indicate which of the controls are difficult for the client to reach and/or operate and describe the nature of the difficulty. Photographs would be helpful should control modifications be eventually required.

One of the basic rules-of-thumb that has developed is that if the client is safely operating a vehicle with modified controls, he or she can operate a farm tractor with the appropriate modifications. A wide variety of methods have been used to enable an individual with almost any type of disability to operate farm equipment.

F. Hitching equipment

1. Various types of automatic hitching devices for the towbar and three-point linkage are commercially available. Most of these devices allow the operator to hitch and unhitch

equipment from the tractor seat. Indicate which piece of equipment is used most frequently and will need to be modified if the client desires to continue using it.

2. Equipment operators with upper torso disabilities can face difficulties during hitching operations and when trying to monitor trailing equipment. One solution that has been used in some cases is a swivel seat, which greatly reduces the amount of twisting required.
3. For clients with back injuries or mobility restrictions, additional rear-view mirrors can be mounted inside and outside the tractor cab. These mirrors can also help reduce the amount of twisting necessary during the operation of trailing equipment. In a few cases, a remote camera and monitors have been used for hitching equipment and for monitoring trailing equipment.
4. Few alternatives exist for attaching power-take-off drivelines. It might be necessary to have this task done by someone else. Research is being done on automatic or self-hitching power-take-off devices, but none are commercially available.
5. Connecting and disconnecting hydraulic couplings can be difficult for a client with arthritis or an arm amputation. Conversion kits and one-handed couplings are available, which require the worker to use only one hand.

G. Other barriers to operating equipment

1. Hearing impaired clients may not be able to distinguish the sounds of malfunctioning equipment. They may need to use alternative techniques, such as watching the smoke being discharged from the exhaust pipe, installing sensors that light up to indicate a malfunction, or conducting more frequent inspections and keeping to a preventive maintenance schedule to reduce the incidence of equipment malfunction.
2. People who have lost sight in one eye frequently experience poor depth perception. Specific problem areas for the farmer with such a visual impairment include backing the tractor and hitching or unhitching implements, raising and lowering the comb on the header, and performing complex repairs on equipment. Additional mirrors, reflectors, and sensor devices that will alert the operator when the equipment comes close to another object may help many visually-impaired operators to develop their own techniques for completing tasks requiring depth perception. For example, a tennis ball suspended by a string that bumps against the windscreen of the combine can tell the operator when he or she has parked it in the right spot avoiding damage to doors and walls. Various types of sunglasses can be used for light-sensitive individuals, and additional lighting can be mounted to the outside of equipment to accommodate those who suffer from night vision problems. Unfortunately, the best teacher has proven to be trial and error, and mishaps are a potential problem. It might be best in some circumstances to find an alternative means of accomplishing the task to avoid exposing the client to unnecessary risk.

H. Equipment maintenance

Indicate which of the maintenance tasks are difficult to perform and describe the problem. For example, the client might not be able to check the oil and coolant level on their harvester because these inspection points are located on the rear of the machine, eight feet off the ground, and are accessible only by a vertical ladder.

For individuals with mobility restrictions, additional handrails or platforms can be mounted to those areas on equipment where maintenance tasks need to be performed. For individuals with arm amputations, various labour-saving devices are available, such as one-handed grease guns, vice grips, and air wrenches. A new oil changing kit

allows an individual to change the oil without ever crawling under the machine, using a pump that pumps the old oil out by inserting a tube into the filler tube.

The key to being successful in this area is regular preventive maintenance and patience. Making repairs and servicing equipment during the off-season or between crops is so much easier and less stressful than when done in the middle of a hectic planting or harvesting period. When more time is available, various approaches to completing maintenance tasks can be tried without the fear and consequences of failure. Again, it might prove cheaper, easier and safer to have some maintenance tasks completed by others. For example, tyre replacement on large equipment is hard physical work without the right tools. Many rural areas have on-farm tyre service available from a local tyre distributor at reasonable costs. Utilise these services where appropriate.

7. Water Supply

The type of water supply will determine how much effort is needed to maintain it. Rivers, creeks and dams traditionally take little maintenance whereas bores, pumps, troughs, and tanks need to have regular servicing and could present a problem for a farmer with a disability.

8. Crop Handling and Storage (including Fruit, Nuts, Vegetables and Grapes)

A. Grain

1. A farmer generally handles grain in one of two ways: storing it in on-farm silos and other structures or transporting it to a local silo to sell or store. Even though economic advantages to on-farm storage are substantial, access to bins, loading and unloading operations, and the monitoring of stored grain present significant problems that must be considered. Off-farm storage eliminates most of these problems and the need for on-site modifications. However, it might be necessary to modify hauling equipment such as grain trucks
2. Numerous types of modifications can be made to on-farm grain-handling systems to make them less labour-intensive. These include appropriate bin placement, pneumatic grain handling systems; stairs on the side of grain bins rather than ladders to allow access to the top; remote hatch openers and controls; grain level indicators and permanently installed temperature probes for easy monitoring of the grain to prevent spoilage.

B. Fruit, Nuts, and Vegetables (including Grapes)

1. Fruit, nuts, vegetables and grapes can be handled in various ways. Traditionally it has been a very labour intensive process with harvesting, packaging and loading done manually. Assistive devices are available but the quality of produce tends to fall when the produce is not handled manually.
2. The type of packing shed and storage facility used may include a cooling facility. Produce needs to be transported to this facility quickly to avoid damage. This type of storage facility can present problems to the producer with a disability that need to be addressed and alternatives examined.

3. Storage of most fresh produce occurs in cool rooms. These need to be accessible to the producer if he/she is to continue to monitor produce quality and perform maintenance tasks on equipment.

C. Hay and Silage

1. Conventional bales, large round or square bales, hay stacks, and silage are the most frequently used methods of hay storage. For farmers with almost any type of physical impairment, the conventional square bale is the most difficult to handle. Round bales allow the farmer to use a front or rear mounted bale loader (on a tractor) to carry bales to the feeders and dump them in.
2. The most desirable method of storing hay is indoors out of the weather. However, conventional bales stored in a conventional hay shed can present some of the most difficult problems to the disabled farmer. A wide variety of hay storage alternatives are available that can be considered.
3. The least labour-intensive, but most expensive method of storing hay is in an upright, self-unloading silo. These silos can be made highly accessible to most disabled operators due to the high level of mechanisation that has been incorporated into silos and accompanying feeding equipment.

D. Other crops

In addition to forages and grains, farmers might also be involved in the production of speciality crops such as cotton, canola, sugar cane, and flowers. Each of these crops requires specific and often unique production practices and equipment. Some activities will be carried out only once or twice a year but are essential to the success of the crop. If a speciality crop is an important source of income for the client, the tasks associated with production of the crop should be carefully examined to identify potential barriers and develop appropriate solutions. In some cases where a crop is highly labour-intensive, such as tobacco production, alternative crops may be a consideration.

9. Sheep, Cattle and Other Livestock Production

A. Sheep

1. Sheep Handling Facilities

   a. Sheep and wool production is an important industry in Australia. Sheep are generally grazed on open ground with the farmer running periodic checks using horses, all terrain vehicles (ATV's), motorbikes or a utility as a means of transport.

   b. Most sheep farms have some sort of a facility for working the sheep, commonly a woolshed and a set of yards. Access to, and mobility in the shearing shed and yards is essential for the farmer to perform necessary sheep husbandry tasks such as: shearing, dipping, drenching, lamb marking and mulesing. Specialised sheep handling equipment is available and includes VE machines, crushes and lamb cradles.

   c. Access to the sheep is critical when carrying out dipping, drenching, and clipping their hooves. Improved yard design can assist in moving the sheep through the yard so to reduce the need to manually handle the sheep. There are, also various types of assistive technology now are available to assist in the handling of sheep.

   d. Transport of stock to and from markets and saleyards can present problems for farmers with a disability. Carriers may be used to transport livestock.

2. Feeding

   a. A well maintained, securely fenced pasture can provide sheep with ample feed and water and provides an ideal low-cost feeding arrangement for a producer with a physical disability.

   b. In situations where hand feeding is needed, a wide variety of modifications can be made to feeding tools and equipment. In some situations, the necessary modifications might involve the conversion from hand feeding to more automated feeding.

3. Shearing/Wool Handling

   Things to consider in the Woolshed

   a. access to shed/yards/equipment (wool presses, shearing gear, grinders, brooms, ink, classing table, wool holding bins, sheep pens).

   b. facilities – toilet, eating, washing.

   c. maintenance – shearing plant, grinder, wool press, yards.

   d. wool handling – bales (bale hooks, marking system, transport), fleeces (floor to table, table to bin, bin to press).

4. Completing sheep husbandry tasks

   Attending to the health care and husbandry of livestock can pose numerous problems for the farmer with a serious disability. In most cases livestock are mobile and difficult to restrain and can be aggressive. At times important livestock-related tasks go unattended because they prove to be too difficult. The farmer needs to consider the consequences of his/her inability to do certain tasks at the necessary times. It might prove advantageous to use the services of a veterinarian to provide regular livestock health care services.

   The list provided in the Assessment Tool represents some of the more important livestock production and health care tasks. Holding and restraining devices for livestock are commercially available for sheep shearing, branding, and administering medications. Once the difficulties associated with a task are identified, alternative methods for completing it can be considered.

B. Cattle - Beef

1. Cattle Handling Facilities

   a. The types of beef producing facilities found in Australia consist mainly of grazing operations and some feedlot operations. Each type of facility or operation presents several barriers, but many severely disabled farmers have been successful in the beef business.

   b. Probably the most accessible type of beef operation in a feedlot is a confined feeding area. This approach allows direct supervision of the livestock and feeding activities.

   c. Access to the cattle is critical in carrying out branding, tagging, dehorning, castration, and other physically demanding tasks. Improved yard design can assist in moving the cattle through the yard so as to reduce the risk of injury in addition there are various types of stationary and portable cattle crushes available, which can decrease the difficulty of these tasks and improve farmer safety.

d. Most feedlots do not present serious barriers with respect to waste removal. Grazing operations pose the least amount of difficulty.

e. Transport of stock to and from markets and saleyards can present problems for farmers with a disability. Carriers may be used to transport livestock.

2. Feeding

a. A well maintained, securely fenced paddock can provide cattle with ample feed and water provides an ideal low-cost feeding arrangement for a beef producer with a physical disability. On the other hand, feed lots with centralised feeding systems are able to be modified to reduce the need for high mobility and manual activities.

b. Where applicable, indicate the difficulties the client has in completing beef feeding activities.

3. Completing cattle husbandry and production tasks

Cattle are mobile, difficult to restrain and can be aggressive. At times important cattle-related tasks go unattended because they prove to be too difficult. The farmer needs to consider the consequences of his/her inability to do certain tasks at the necessary times. It might prove advantageous to use the services of a veterinarian to provide regular livestock husbandry services. Once the difficulties associated with a task are identified, alternative methods for completing it can be considered.

C. Dairy Cattle

1. Cattle Handling Facilities

a. In Australia there are three common types of dairies – the Herringbone, Rotary and Walk-through. The dairy sheds on many older dairy farms are commonly the walk-through variety, which were built with the cow in mind and not the farmer. This creates problems for the farmer with a mobility impairment as access in these dairies is difficult. The gutters and stairs may make it difficult to attach the milking equipment, and to open and close gates. Walk-through dairies also require considerable stooping, bending, and lifting, which can present serious problems for the farmer with a missing limb or with back, hip, or knee problems. Finally, because of the close contact with the cows, the farmer risks injury from being kicked, stepped on, or crushed between the animal and a solid object (in any type of dairy).

Today's milking shed designs have revolutionised the milking process. They allow the farmer to milk in a standing position and have been modified to accommodate an individual in a wheelchair. Some milking cups can be attached with one hand and are automatically removed when the milking is completed. Feeding can be done automatically, and the cows can be brought in and out without the farmer leaving the milking area.

b. Bulk tanks may prove inaccessible to farmers with mobility impairments. This may be due to limited walking space, narrow doors, steps, and the layout of milk-storage and handling equipment. Newer facilities which are designed around the bulk tank and pipeline-handling system are generally easier to make accessible.

c. Waste removal and building sanitation are essential in all dairy operations. Several types of modified equipment, tools and alternative techniques can make waste removal easier for a disabled farmer. One of the easiest approaches to this problem is high-pressure washers which eliminates much of the physical involvement in building sanitation activities.

d. Transport of stock to and from markets and saleyards can present problems for farmers with a disability. A possible solution may be to employ contract workers to transport livestock.

2. Feeding

a. There are several different types of feeding systems available for dairy sheds. Automatic feeding systems pose the least amount of physical exertion and manual bucket feeding the most, so knowing which system your client has will assist in designing a more efficient work system.

b. Where applicable, indicate the difficulty the client has in using equipment related to completing dairy cattle feeding activities within the milking shed.

3. Completing dairy cattle husbandry and production tasks

Cattle are mobile, difficult to restrain and can be aggressive. At times important cattle-related tasks go unattended because they prove to be too difficult. The farmer needs to consider the consequences of his/her inability to do certain tasks at the necessary times. It might prove advantageous to use the services of a veterinarian to provide regular livestock health care services. Once the difficulties associated with a task are identified, alternative methods for completing it can be considered. For example, a dairy farmer who performed artificial insemination prior to acquiring a disability could turn that responsibility over to a local artificial inseminator or veterinarian.

D. Pigs

1. Facilities

a. When you visit a pig operation, you might see several different types of pig-raising facilities, ranging from a converted shed to open pasture to the most sophisticated environmentally controlled confinement building. Outdoor or older facilities will prove to be the most difficult to modify, especially for someone in a wheelchair or with severely limited mobility. Each type of facility poses some problems even for the able-bodied farmer, but all can be made more accessible.

Because of the need to monitor pigs continually, it is essential that the client have access to all key buildings involved with pig production. This is true even if most of the physical labour is done by others. Modern confinement buildings offer many advantages to the disabled farmer. They generally provide a comfortable environment in which to work and allow the operator to carry out most of the pig-raising activities within a limited area. In those confinement buildings where the aisles are narrow, a wheelchair with a smaller seat assembly or a motor scooter can provide easier mobility. In some cases, farrowing pens have been raised to put the baby pigs within reach. Automatic waterers and feeders allow the farmer to focus his attention on health care, breeding, and other management activities. One drawback to the tightly sealed confinement buildings is the quality of the air to which the farmer is exposed. A combination of carbon dioxide, ammonia, methane, hydrogen sulfide, and particulates found in nearly all confinement buildings have proven to be dangerous for individuals prone to respiratory ailments. In some cases the farmer's condition becomes so severe that he is forced to discontinue working in a confinement building and return to open air or well-ventilated facilities. Proper respiratory protection should be worn while working in a confinement building.

In addition, permanent noise induced hearing loss may results from continued exposure to high frequency pig 'squeals' if approved hearing protection is not worn in the shed.

b. Access to the pigs is essential for the farmer to be able to carry out pig handling tasks such as medical treatment, weighing, castration etc.

c. Most modern pig operations use slotted floors which greatly reduce the work involved in waste removal. Clean-up and sanitation can be accomplished with relatively inexpensive high pressure washers.

d. Transport of stock to and from markets and saleyards can present problems for farmers with a disability. A possible solution may be to employ contract workers to transport livestock.

2. Feeding

   a. There are a variety of highly mechanised feeding systems available but these tend to be expensive and if only a few pigs are raised, it may not be economically feasible to automate the feeding operation.

   b. Indicate the difficulty the client has in activating controls for automatic feeding systems.

   c. Carrying out routine maintenance on feeding equipment allows the farmer to save money and time, therefore any difficulties experienced will need to be addressed.

3. Completing pig husbandry and production tasks

   Attending to the husbandry and production needs of livestock can pose numerous problems for the farmer with a serious disability. In most cases livestock are mobile and difficult to restrain and can be very aggressive. At times important livestock-related tasks go unattended because they prove to be too difficult. The farmer needs to consider the consequences of his/her inability to do certain tasks at the necessary times. It might prove advantageous to use the services of a veterinarian to provide regular livestock health care services. Once the difficulties associated with a task are identified, alternative methods for completing it can be considered. Holding devices for pigs, such as piglet cradles are available to assist in health care operations.

E. Poultry

1. Facilities

   a. The types of poultry raising facilities found within Australia include commercial free range operations and confinement poultry operations. The type of facilities the client works with will present different challenges and so need to be addressed.

   b. The farmer needs to be able to access the poultry production facilities for routine tasks such as egg collection, feeding, watering, cleaning, and general maintenance.

   c. Access to the poultry is essential for carrying out medical tasks such as monitoring flock health, removal and disposal of dead birds, and artificial insemination procedures.

   d. Waste removal and building sanitation are critical in poultry operations. Different methods of building fumigation, waste removal and quarantine procedures present different levels of difficulty for farmers.

2. Feeding

a. An automated feeding system is an ideal feeding arrangement for the producer with a physical disability. Automated feeding systems can be costly and other options may need to be considered.

b. In situations where hand feeding is practised, a wide variety of modifications can be made to feeding tools and equipment. In some situations, the necessary modifications may involve conversion to an automated feeding system.

3. Egg Handling

The type of egg handling and packing shed facilities can present problem to the producer with a disability that need to be addresses and alternatives examined. Assistive technology is available to assist in loading packaged produce and help reduce manual handling.

4. Transport

Transport of produce to and from markets can present problems for farmers with a disability. A possible solution may be to employ contract workers to load and transport the produce.

F. Other livestock

The farmer might be involved with livestock other than sheep, cattle, pigs or poultry. If so, complete this section of the Assessment Tool in a similar fashion to that described under the previous livestock sections. Many of the recommendations and concerns listed under the previous sections would have application to other livestock production activities.

G. Accessing outdoor livestock areas

1. Gates often cause problems for farmers with arm amputations, mobility, and/or visual impairments. Various types of automatic gate openers are available commercially, and some can even be operated from a tractor or other vehicle. In some cases, innovative farmers have devised their own easily operated gate latches. Consideration may also be given to the installation of cattle grids or ramps so farmers can access paddocks without the need to open a gate.

2. Fences can also pose problems. Individuals with visual impairments may opt to use several different types of fences on their farms. They can then determine their location on their land by feeling the various fences. Farmers with arm amputations often find it difficult to repair their fences. Some fence-repair equipment can be manipulated with one hand, such as the magnetic staple-holder, which can fit inside the grip of a Dorrance hook. Low maintenance electric fences are an alternative, which may be considered.

3. Accessing livestock outdoors can be difficult for a farmer with a mobility impairment. Many farmers use 4 wheeled motor bikes or all terrain vehicles (ATV's) to reach grazing areas to access livestock. These vehicles can be used to carry small amounts of feed, fencing equipment, tools, and if equipped with a trailer, transport calves during calving season.

The Australian Centre for Agricultural Health and Safety has publications available from a research project investigating ATV's and motorcycles used on farms.

10. Home Orchards, Gardens and Woodlots (excluding commercial production)

A. Orchards

1. With a little ingenuity, even an orchard can be made more accessible to individuals with physical disabilities. If the farmer has a serious interest in producing fruit, modifications should be considered.
2. A careful analysis of each of the tasks that the client wishes to perform in the orchard will identify the most serious barriers. For example, pesticide spraying might be required every 5 to 10 days. A switch from a hand held sprayer to a tractor mounted mist blower might prove to be a workable alternative. Hand operated pruning shears can be replaced with powered units. Large orchards even utilise mechanical harvesters.

B. Garden Vegetable Production

1. If the farmer is involved in producing fresh produce, the benefits of being able to continue gardening are worth the small investments it would take to accommodate most disabilities.
2. There are wide varieties of techniques, tools and equipment that would make vegetable growing easier. These include cultural practices such as raising tomatoes on wire cages, utilising raised beds and laying down plastic mulch to reduce the weed problem. Portable pesticide applicators and low-cost irrigation systems can help ensure a high quality product.

C. Woodlots

Woodlots in this context are thought of as places to gather firewood for personal family use. They are not easily accessible and careful consideration should be given to the potential risks before modifications are undertaken.

11. Farm Management Activities

A. Maintenance of business records

In most cases, even clients with severe physical impairments can perform this task. In some cases the client's spouse/partner has been responsible for these activities in the past, but transferring these responsibilities to the client often proves to make the farmer a better and more profitable operator.

B. Computerisation of farm records

Numerous software packages are available to help the farmer computerise the farm records. These include farm management programs, livestock records, crop management and inventory control programs. Other programs are available, which help in decision making concerning machinery selection and marketing. Computerised systems can be operated by clients with many disabilities from amputated limbs to high-level spinal cord injuries or visual impairments.

C. Sales and purchases

Most clients with severe physical impairments can still perform these tasks. Often the quality of the decisions made in the area of sales and purchases improve following a disability because more time is devoted to these activities. Rehabilitation providers should be aware of sale systems options, eg. CALM (Computer Assisted Livestock Marketing), and other "sale by description" systems which reduce stock handling needs.

D. The most important resource of any business is people. Poorly managed and inadequately trained employees are a serious liability. If a client has several employees, an investment in improving labour management skills should prove highly rewarding, even for the best of businesses.

12. Additional Vocational Skills

Sometimes a client may need to seek off-farm employment to provide supplementary income. In extreme cases, the client's disability may be so severe that he or she must consider an entirely new occupation. The purpose of this section of the Assessment Tool is to help you obtain additional information about other vocational skills and interests. A comprehensive vocational evaluation may be needed to gain further information concerning transferable skills and interest.

When asking questions concerning education level, be sure to ask delicately, as questions of this nature can cause offence.

Your client may wish to explore other income-producing options within agriculture. He or she may choose to lease a portion of his/her land to another farmer, raise small livestock, or cultivate a small area of cash crop. (For more information on alternative on-farm enterprises for farmers with disabilities contact the Australian Centre for Agricultural Health and Safety, Moree or your State Department of Agriculture).

13. Establishing Primary Goals

Upon completion of the agricultural worksite assessment, you and the farmer must work together to determine the goals that they consider to be most important if they are to remain active in their agricultural operation (or to pursue another vocation). Each goal area should include both long and short term objectives to help the client reach each goal. Take ample time to complete this section. Setting goals and developing strategies to reach these goals could prove to be the most important outcome of completing the Assessment Tool. The goal setting will require time and effort on the part of both the rehabilitation worker and the farmer. It should be decided over a number of contacts and should be an ongoing process of revision, evaluation and modification.

AGRICULTURAL WORKSITE ASSESSMENT TOOL FOR FARMERS AND AGRICULTURAL WORKERS WITH PHYSICAL DISABILITIES.

AGRICULTURAL WORKSITE ASSESSMENT TOOL FOR FARMERS AND AGRICULTURAL WORKERS WITH PHYSICAL DISABILITIES

(Australian Version)

1. PERSONAL DATA

Name: _____

Address: _____

_____Town:_____

State: _____ Post code:_____

Phone: ( )_____ Fax: ( )_____Email: _____

Date of birth: _____/____/_____ Sex: *(please circle*) Male/Female

Spouse/Partner's name:_____

Names and ages of children at home:

	Age
	Age
	Age
	Age

Social supports:

_____

_____

_____

Directions to the farm:

_____

_____

_____

_____

Disability: _____

Date of injury/diagnosis: _____

Describe the cause of the disability:

_____

_____

_____

Functional limitations as described by client and/or referral source:
Include exact measurements if known: (Db of hearing loss, visual acuity, lifting limits, range of motion, specific limitations on standing, sitting, transferring, carrying, walking, bending, stooping, balance, etc.)

_____

_____

_____

Occupation: _____

( ) Full-time farmer (primary income from farm)

( ) Part-time farmer (primary income from off-farm job)

( ) Dependent of farm family

( ) Farm employee

( ) Agricultural business (type): _____

( ) Other: _____

2. GENERAL FARM DATA

A. Type and size of operation: (*tick primary commodities produced*)

	Type:	**Size:**
☐	Sheep	_____ head
☐	Beef	_____ head
☐	Dairy	_____ head
☐	Pig	_____ head
☐	Poultry	_____ flock size
☐	Grains (types and no. hectares):	_____
☐	Fruit and vegetables, incl. grapes (types):	_____
☐	Sugar cane (no. hectares)	_____
☐	Cotton (no. hectares):	_____
☐	Speciality crop(s) (type):	_____
☐	Agricultural business (type):	_____
☐	Other:	_____

B. Summarise the responsibilities/activities of the farmer prior to acquiring the disabling injury or diagnosis of disability:

_____

_____

_____

_____

C. List family members and co-workers who work and assist on the farm:

Name	Relationship	Age	Responsibilities
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____

3. OVERALL FARM ACCESSIBILITY

A. Describe the general type of terrain and problems with mobility

(eg.: hilly, flat, rocky, wooded, undulating):

_____

_____

_____

B. Is the farm yard and/or areas around primary buildings surfaced and well drained? Yes/No
Describe type of surface and problems:

_____

_____

_____

C. Describe the condition of access roads to, and around the property.

_____

_____

_____

4. GENERAL FARM MAINTENANCE

A. Workshop

1. Can the client enter the workshop independently Yes / No

Including access to the workshop from the home, machinery sheds?

Describe the barriers (eg: steps, narrow doorways, heavy doors):

_____

_____

2. Describe mobility problems and the type of floor the workshop has (eg: concrete, dirt, gravel):

_____

_____

3. Can the client reach stationary power tools and service equipment? Yes / No

If no, why not?

_____

_____

4. Can the client perform maintenance tasks on the tool bench? Yes / No

If no, why not?

_____

_____

5. Is the workshop:

Well ventilated for summer?	Yes / No
Equipped with adequate ventilation for welding, painting, and operating engines?	Yes / No
Heated for winter use?	Yes / No
Equipped with toilet facilities?	Yes / No
Adequately lit?	Yes / No
Equipped with telephone or 2-way radio?	Yes / No

B. Basic Hand Tools

Check which of the following hand tools the client has difficulty using and describe the problems each presents:

	Hand Tools	**Problems**
☐	Sockets and ratchet	_____
☐	Wrench / shifting spanner	_____
☐	Hammer	_____
☐	Screwdriver	_____
☐	Pliers and vice grips	_____
☐	Punch and chisel	_____

☐	File	_____
☐	Knife	_____
☐	Hand saw	_____
☐	Wire strainers	_____
☐	Tap and die set	_____
☐	Crow bar	_____
☐	Hand drill	_____
☐	Grease gun	_____
☐	Hand air pump	_____
☐	Vice and C-clamps	_____
☐	Rake, shovel and hoe	_____
☐	Pruning equipment	_____
☐	Other: _____	_____
☐	_____	_____

C. Power Tools

Check which of the following power tools the client has difficulty using and describe the problems each presents:

	Power Tools	**Problems**
☐	Power saw	_____
☐	Pneumatic spanner	_____
☐	Drill Press	_____
☐	Bench grinder	_____
☐	Angle grinder	_____
☐	Electric Welder	_____
☐	Oxy Acetylene Welder	_____
☐	Air Compressor	_____
☐	Chain Saw	_____
☐	Brush Cutter	_____
☐	Lathe	_____
☐	Other: _____	_____
☐	_____	_____

D. Maintenance Materials

Check which of the following maintenance materials the client has difficulty using and describe the problems each presents:

	Tools	Problems
☐	Nuts and bolts	_____
☐	Nails, screws, staples	_____
☐	Timber	_____
☐	Glue	_____
☐	Wire	_____
☐	Paint	_____
☐	Sandpaper	_____
☐	Welding rod	_____
☐	Steel	_____
☐	Lubricants and Fuel	_____
☐	Chains	_____
☐	Belts	_____
☐	Other: _____	_____
☐	_____	_____

5. FARM CHEMICALS

A. Describe the primary chemical storage facility:

Lockable	Yes / No
Isolated from the home	Yes / No
Away from water / drains	Yes / No
Bunded (floor with lip to contain spills)	Yes / No
Accessible from machinery shed / home	Yes / No

B. What safe chemical handling procedures are used?

_____

_____

_____

_____

C. Is personal protective equipment available? Yes / No

List them:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

D. Are chemicals dispensed safely? Yes / No

Describe the pouring system in place.

_____

_____

E. How are empty chemical containers disposed of?

_____

_____

F. Describe first aid procedures.

_____

_____

6. EQUIPMENT AND MACHINERY

A. Machinery Storage Areas

1. Describe the primary machinery storage areas (eg: enclosed, open shed, outdoors):

_____

_____

2. Can the client enter machinery storage areas independently? Yes / No

(including access to the machinery storage area from the home, workshop)?

If no, describe the barriers:

_____

_____

3. What types of floors do the machinery storage areas have. (eg: concrete, dirt, sand, gravel)?

Describe mobility problems

_____

_____

4. Do areas provide sufficient space for most frequently used equipment? Yes / No

If no, how is other equipment stored?

_____

_____

5. Are the storage areas conducive to hitching implements and performing service and maintenance tasks on equipment? Yes / No

If no, where are these performed?

_____

_____

B. Primary, most frequently used, power units, eg: trucks, tractors, utes, motorbikes/ATV's.

Make	**Model**	**Cabin**	**Heater / A-C**	**2way radio**
_____	_____	Yes / No	Yes / No	Yes / No
_____	_____	Yes / No	Yes / No	Yes / No
_____	_____	Yes / No	Yes / No	Yes / No
_____	_____	Yes / No	Yes / No	Yes / No
_____	_____	Yes / No	Yes / No	Yes / No

C. Accessing Equipment

Describe the difficulties or potential safety hazards the client faces when mounting and dismounting frequently used equipment:

Make	**Model**	**Problems**
_____	_____	_____
		_____
_____	_____	_____
		_____
_____	_____	_____
		_____
_____	_____	_____
		_____

D. Equipment Seating

Describe difficulties related to equipment seating and explain any modifications being used to improve seating comfort:

Difficulty	**Modification**
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

E. Controls

For tractors, harvesters, cultivators and motorised equipment used most frequently by the client, indicate which of the controls are difficult to reach or operate and describe the specific problems.

Make and Model: _____

Control		**Difficulty**
☐	Steering	_____
☐	Clutch	_____
☐	Brakes	_____
☐	Throttle	_____
☐	Ignition and accessory switches	_____
☐	Gear stick	_____
☐	Power-take-off	_____
☐	Levers for hydraulic remotes	_____
☐	Differential lock	_____
☐	Other: _____	_____

Make and Model: _____

Control		**Difficulty**
☐	Steering	_____
☐	Clutch	_____
☐	Brakes	_____
☐	Throttle	_____
☐	Ignition and accessory switches	_____
☐	Gear stick	_____
☐	Power-take-off	_____
☐	Levers for hydraulic remotes	_____
☐	Differential lock	_____
☐	Other: _____	_____

Make and Model: _____

Control		Difficulty
☐	Steering	_____
☐	Clutch	_____
☐	Brakes	_____
☐	Throttle	_____
☐	Ignition and accessory switches	_____
☐	Gear stick	_____
☐	Power-take-off	_____
☐	Levers for hydraulic remotes	_____
☐	Differential lock	_____
☐	Other: _____	_____

Make and Model: _____

Control		Difficulty
☐	Steering	_____
☐	Clutch	_____
☐	Brakes	_____
☐	Throttle	_____
☐	Ignition and accessory switches	_____
☐	Gear stick	_____
☐	Power-take-off	_____
☐	Levers for hydraulic remotes	_____
☐	Differential lock	_____
☐	Other: _____	_____

F. Hitching and unhitching equipment

1. Which pieces of machinery does the client have difficulty hitching and unhitching?

Machine	Problems
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

2. Can the client turn upper torso 180 degrees and operate controls simultaneously while backing up the tractor? Yes / No

If no, explain how he/she compensates:

_____

_____

3. What type of rear-view mirrors does the equipment have, and where are they mounted?

_____

_____

4. Can the client connect and disconnect power take off (PTO) drive-lines independently?

If no, explain how he/she compensates: Yes / No

_____

_____

5. Can the client connect and disconnect hydraulic couplings independently? Yes / No

If no, explain how he/she compensates:

_____

_____

G. Other Barriers to Operating Equipment

1. Does the client have a hearing impairment which would prevent him/her from hearing when equipment is operating or malfunctioning? Yes / No

2. Does the client have a vision loss which results in poor depth perception or in difficulty working in blight light or seeing at night? Yes / No

If yes, describe.

_____

_____

H. Equipment Maintenance

Check which tasks the client has difficulty performing and describe the problems:

Task		**Problems**
☐	Fuelling	_____
☐	Changing the oil and filters	_____
☐	Lubricating equipment	_____
☐	Making major repairs	_____
☐	Making minor machine adjustments	_____

☐ Servicing and changing tyres _____

☐ Adding and removing tyre fluid _____

☐ Other: _____ _____

☐ Other: _____ _____

7. WATER SUPPLY

A. Describe the type of water supply to the home most frequently used and any difficulties encountered by the client (eg: pump, dam, windmill).

_____

_____

B. Describe the stock water supply and any difficulties encountered by the client.

_____

_____

8. CROP HANDLING AND STORAGE

A. Grain Does not apply ☐

1. Type of grain-storage facilities used (eg. field bins, silos, sheds):

_____

_____

2. Can the client access grain-storage facilities independently? Yes / No

If no, why not?

_____

_____

3. Type of grain-handling equipment used (eg. augers, hoppers, sweeps):

_____

_____

4. Does the client have access to this equipment? Yes / No

If no, why not?

_____

_____

B. Fruit, Nuts and Vegetables (including Grapes)

If fruit, nuts, vegetables or grapes are produced, how are they handled (eg: picked by hand or machine, packed in the field or in a packing shed, transport to storage facility)?

_____

_____

2. Type of produce packing shed / storage facility used, any difficulties with access to these?

_____

_____

3. Type of produce handling equipment used (eg: storage bins, cartons, forklifts).

_____

_____

C. Hay and Silage Does not apply ☐

1. If hay is produced, how is it handled (eg: hay/silage, conventional or large round bales)?

_____

_____

2. Type of hay-storage facilities used:

_____

_____

3. Can the client access the hay-storage facilities and handling equipment independently?

If no, why not? Yes / No

_____

_____

C. Other Crops

List other major crops produced and describe any accessibility problems encountered in handling or storing these crops:

Crop	**Problem**
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

9. SHEEP, CATTLE AND OTHER LIVESTOCK PRODUCTION

A. Sheep Does Not Apply ☐

1. Sheep Handling Facilities

a. Type of sheep facilities used (eg: fenced pasture, woolshed, sheep yards) and access to these:

_____

_____

b. Can the client operate within the facilities independently? Yes / No

If no, describe the specific barriers.

_____

_____

c. Can the client handle sheep for medical treatment, drenching etc.? Yes / No

If no, describe the specific barriers.

_____

_____

d. What sheep handling equipment is available (eg: lamb marking cradle, VE machine), and what problems are encountered by the client.

_____

_____

e. Describe the method of sheep transport and problems encountered by the client:

_____

_____

2. Feeding

a. Describe the type of feeding system used:

_____

_____

b. Describe the problems the client faces in operating various feeding tools and equipment (eg: shovels, buckets, tractors, trailers, grain carts):

_____

_____

3. Shearing / Wool Handling

Describe the problems the client faces at shearing, such as mustering, penning up and wool handling.

_____

_____

4. Sheep Husbandry and Production Tasks

Check those tasks that are difficult to perform and describe the problems they present:

	Task	**Problem**
☐	Ear tagging	_____
☐	Marking / Castration	_____
☐	Dehorning	_____
☐	Hoof pairing (trimming)	_____
☐	Drenching	_____
☐	Dipping	_____
☐	Vaccination	_____
☐	Artificial insemination	_____
☐	Mulesing	_____
☐	Footrot treatment	_____
☐	Blow fly Treatment	_____
☐	Shearing / Crutching	_____
☐	Loading for transport	_____
☐	Other: _____	_____
☐	_____	_____

B. Beef Cattle Does not apply ☐

1. Cattle Handling Facilities

a. Types of facilities used (eg: feedlot, fenced pasture, cattle yards) and access to these.

_____

_____

b. Can the client operate in the facilities independently? Yes / No

If no, describe the specific barriers:

_____

_____

c. Can the client handle the cattle for vaccinating, drenching etc.? Yes / No

If no, describe the specific barriers:

_____

_____

d. What cattle handling equipment is available, and what problems are encountered by the client (eg: calf marking cradle, cattle crush).

_____

_____

e. Describe the method of waste removal used and specific problems encountered:

_____

_____

f. Describe the method of beef transport and problems encountered by the client:

_____

_____

2. Feeding

a. Describe the type of feeding system used (eg: feedlot, open grazing etc.):

_____

_____

b. Describe the problems the client faces in operating various feeding tools and equipment (eg: shovels, buckets, tractors, trailers, grain carts).

_____

_____

3. Cattle Husbandry and Production Tasks

Check those tasks that are difficult to perform and describe the problems they present:

	Task	**Problem**
☐	Ear- tagging	_____
☐	Branding	_____
☐	Castration	_____
☐	Dehorning	_____
☐	Dipping	_____
☐	Drenching	_____

☐ Vaccination _____

☐ Artificial insemination _____

☐ Pregnancy Testing _____

☐ Calf Delivery _____

☐ Loading for transport _____

☐ Other: _____ _____

☐ _____ _____

C. Dairy Cattle

1. Facilities

a. Type of milking facility (eg: walk through, herringbone, rotary).

_____

_____

b. Can the client enter the milking shed independently? Yes / No

If no, describe the specific barriers:

_____

_____

c. What cattle handling equipment is available, and what problems are encountered by the client (eg: calf marking cradle, cattle crush).

_____

_____

d. Describe the methods of waste removal and building sanitation used (eg: gutter cleaners, liquid manure handling, scrapers, flush system) and specific problems encountered:

_____

_____

e. Describe the method of dairy cattle transport and problems encountered by the client:

_____

_____

2. Feeding

a. Describe the type of feeding system used (eg: automatic feeder, buckets etc.):

_____

_____

b. Describe the problems the client faces in using various feeding tools and equipment (eg: shovels, buckets, tractors, trailers, grain carts):

_____

_____

c. Can the client reach and activate controls on feeding equipment independently? Yes / No
If no, describe the specific barriers:

_____

_____

3. Cattle Husbandry and Production Tasks

Check those tasks that are difficult to perform and describe the problems they present:

Task		**Problem**
☐	Milking	_____
☐	Ear- tagging	_____
☐	Branding	_____
☐	Castration	_____
☐	Dehorning	_____
☐	Dipping	_____
☐	Drenching	_____
☐	Vaccination	_____
☐	Artificial insemination	_____
☐	Pregnancy Testing	_____
☐	Calf Delivery	_____
☐	Loading for transport	_____
☐	Other: _____	_____
☐	_____	_____

D. Pigs

1. Facilities

Types of facilities used (shed and/or open range):

_____

_____

b. Can the client enter and operate in the facilities independently? Yes / No

If no, describe the specific barriers:

_____

_____

c. Can the client access the pigs for medical treatment, weighing, castration etc.?

If no, describe the specific barriers: Yes / No

_____

_____

d. What pig handling equipment is available (eg: piglet marking cradle), and what problems are encountered by the client?

_____

_____

e. Describe the method of waste removal used and the specific problems encountered:

_____

_____

f. Describe the method of pig transport and problems encountered by the client:

_____

_____

2. Feeding

a. Describe the type of feeding system used (eg: automatic feeder, buckets etc.):

_____

_____

b. Describe the problems the client faces in using various feeding tools and equipment (eg: shovels, buckets, tractors, trailers, grain carts):

_____

_____

c. Can the client reach and activate controls on feeding equipment independently? Yes / No

If no, describe the specific barriers:

_____

_____

3. Pig Husbandry and Production Tasks

Check those tasks that are difficult to perform and describe the problems they present:

	Task	Problem
☐	Branding	_____
☐	Tattooing	_____
☐	Castration	_____
☐	Drenching	_____
☐	Vaccination	_____
☐	Weighing Pigs	_____
☐	Artificial insemination	_____
☐	Pregnancy Testing	_____
☐	Assist with Farrowing	_____
☐	Loading for transport	_____
☐	Other: _____	_____
☐	_____	_____

E. Poultry

1. Facilities

a. Types of facilities used (battery hens, shed, free range):

_____

_____

b. Can the client enter and operate in the facilities independently? Yes / No

If no, describe the specific barriers:

_____

_____

c. Can the client access the flock for tasks such as monitoring flock health, removal and disposal of dead birds, and artificial insemination? Yes / No

If no, describe the specific barriers:

_____

_____

d. Describe the method of waste removal used and the specific problems encountered:

_____

_____

2. Feeding

a. Describe the type of feeding system used (eg: automatic feeder, buckets):

_____

_____

b. Describe the problems the client faces in using various feeding tools and equipment (eg: shovels, buckets, tractors, trailers, grain carts):

_____

_____

c. Can the client reach and activate controls on feeding equipment independently? Yes / No

If no, describe the specific barriers:

_____

_____

3. Poultry Husbandry and Production Tasks

Check those tasks that are difficult to perform and describe the problems they present:

	Task	**Problem**
☐	Marking	_____
☐	Beak trimming	_____
☐	Vaccination	_____
☐	Artificial insemination	_____
☐	Weighing	_____
☐	Pack bird for dispatch	_____
☐	Loading for transport	_____
☐	Other: _____	_____
☐	_____	_____

C. Other livestock (eg: horses, deer, emu, alpacas, goats, ostrich) Does not apply ☐

1. Facilities

a. Type of facilities used:

_____

_____

b. Can the client enter and operate in the facilities independently? Yes / No

If no, describe the specific barriers:

_____

_____

c. Can the client access the animals? Yes / No

If no, describe the specific barriers:

_____

_____

2. Feeding

a. Describe the type of feeding system used:

_____

_____

b. Describe the problems the client faces in operating various feeding tools and equipment (eg: shovels, buckets, tractors, trailers, grain carts):

_____

_____

c. Can the client reach and activate controls on feeding equipment independently? Yes / No

If no, describe the specific barriers:

_____

_____

D. Accessing outdoor livestock areas.

1. Gates

Type of Gate	**Type of Latch/Securing Mechanism**	**Problems**
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

2. Types of fences used (eg: electric, wire, post and rail):

_____

_____

3. Can the client access outdoor livestock independently? Yes / No

If no, explain specific barriers:

_____

_____

4. Do muddy conditions present mobility problems during wet weather? Yes / No

_____

_____

10. DOMESTIC FARM ANIMALS

A. Farm Dogs

1. Can the client access the animal for feeding, medical treatment, etc.? Yes / No

If no, describe the specific barriers:

_____

_____

B. Fowl (including chooks, ducks, geese)

1. Can the client access the animal for feeding, medical treatment, etc.? Yes / No

If no, describe the specific barriers:

_____

_____

C. Cats

1. Can the client access the animal for feeding, medical treatment, etc.? Yes / No

If no, describe the specific barriers:

_____

_____

11. HOME ORCHARDS, GARDENS AND WOODLOTS (excluding commercial production)

A. Orchards Does not apply ☐

1. Describe the type of layout and the contribution the orchard makes to the overall farm operation (eg: family use, roadside market):

_____

_____

2. Note specific problems the client faces in completing orchard maintenance and fruit picking (eg: spraying, pruning, picking fruit):

_____

_____

B. Garden Vegetable Production Does not apply ☐

1. Describe the type of vegetable production and the contribution it makes to the overall farm operation (eg: family use, roadside market):

_____

_____

2. Describe the problems the client faces in completing gardening tasks (eg: soil preparation, planting, weeding, cultivating, picking produce):

_____

_____

C. Woodlots

1. Describe any difficulties the client encounters in the gathering of wood for personal family use:

_____

_____

12. FARM MANAGEMENT ACTIVITIES

A. Is the client currently responsible for maintaining the farm business records? Yes / No

1. If yes, will he/she be able to continue? Yes / No

2. If no, who will? _____

B. Are the farm records computerised? Yes / No

1. If yes, what type of system is being used?

_____

2. If no, is computerisation being considered? Yes / No

_____

C. Is the client responsible for most of the sales and purchases related to the business?

Yes / No

If no, who is?

_____

D. Is the client responsible for labour management (finding, hiring, and training)? Yes / No

If no, who is?

_____

13. ADDITIONAL VOCATIONAL SKILLS

A. Prior and current off-farm employment and approximate dates (eg: technical training):

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

B. Leadership skills:

1. Organisational involvement (eg: Local council, School Board, Farmers Associations):

_____

_____

2. Offices held:

_____

_____

C. Describe vocational interests other than farming:

_____

_____

D. Indicate the highest grade completed and list any additional training or education received since leaving high school:

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

14. ESTABLISHING PRIMARY GOALS

A. Prioritise the following goal areas concerning worksite accessibility, with number one indicating the highest priority.

_____ Improve overall mobility or accessibility around farmyard, buildings, and paddocks.

_____ Improve livestock handling abilities related to feeding methods, health-care needs, waste removal, and building sanitation.

_____ Improve ability to effectively and safely use equipment and machinery, including accessing, operating, and maintaining equipment and hitching implements.

_____ Improve ability to perform general maintenance activities around the farm, including effective use of hand tools, power tools, and maintenance materials.

_____ Improve ability to manage farm operation successfully, including the maintenance of business records, sales and purchases, and labour management activities.

_____ Identify an alternative farm enterprise which would better suit the client's ability.

_____ Obtain part or full-time off-farm employment

_____ Other: _____

B. For each of the primary goal areas, list both long-term and short-term objectives that will be addressed. Add extra pages as necessary.

Goal area 1: _____

Long-term objectives:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

Short-term objectives

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

Goal area 2: _____

Long-term objectives:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

Short-term objectives

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

Goal area 3: _____

Long-term objectives:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

Short-term objectives

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

For additional goal areas, attach extra pages as needed

Additional Assessment Areas

Social/Psychological:

Financial:

Activities of Daily Living (ADLs):

Additional Information:

Requests/Services Provided (dates):

Follow-up Activities:

MAINTAINING CLIENT RECORDS

Maintaining a database of complete client records is vital for appropriate and responsible service delivery, as well as an important part of program evaluation. Accomplishing this involves accurately compiling information on each individual served. Client records should not only reflect how you are providing assistance, but also include the demographics and background necessary to properly identify the population served. Complete and accurate files are not just good case management tools, they contain the rationale and support for your continued existence as a funded program.

Contents

As content is governed by the data needed for program evaluation, as well as service delivery, most relevant information will be in two broad categories: (1) tracking the progress and (2) demographics/case history. Both of these are addressed in the assessment tools outlined earlier in this publication. The tracking portion begins with the sections describing specific physical limitations and continues in the listing of problems and difficulties in performing certain tasks. It may also continue beyond the assessment tool itself by including a case narrative (dated, signed and in reverse chronological order) describing all contacts, information exchanged, plans developed and goals met if desired. The demographics begin with the first contact made and can be recorded either in the form of a referral information sheet or via the assessment tool sections 1 and 2. This not only includes the basic who and where, but should go on to provide an accurate description of the client's disability, medical history and functional limitations. If written medical evaluations are available, and access is granted by the client, these may also be sought and maintained in the file. (Please note confidentiality).

The layout of the content is not necessarily critical, only that it should be logically arranged, easily reviewed, neat and above all, accurate. Since file folders fall into two sides, one suggestion could be to use the left side for the tracking portion with narratives, plans and pictures, in general anything that happened since your agency became involved. The right side could be demographics, using forms for easier compilation and conversion to computer database programs. Behind that, any medical or other evaluations used as case history. Other formats may be just as appropriate depending on the rehabilitation provider and their agency policy.

Updating

Updating information is essential to good case management. If you do not know the past, you can not plan for the future. Keep all records up to date and try to complete them at, or within a reasonable time, after contact with the client.

Confidentiality

The client-counsellor relationship revolves around trust, and from that trust, the exchange of information begins to identify problems and eliminate barriers. Much of the detail you need for an accurate assessment involves intimate personal information. If an outside funding

source is desired for modifications or medical management, financial information and family resources will be examined, if not by you, then certainly by the agency you will refer them to. The degree of detail required depends on the involvement of the client with your program. As stated earlier in making the initial contact, your clients may know what they want specifically and a full disclosure of information would be inappropriate or unnecessary. In other situations a complete assessment might uncover potential problems that could be planned for or eliminated. Either way, it's up to the interviewer to make the judgement call of just how far to go in asking for confidential information. You must give careful reassurance to the client that none of their personal information will be reproduced, openly discussed or otherwise released to non-program personnel without their express, written permission. While it's very tempting to refer media people to your star clients in an effort to build public relations, it should be up to your client to decide. Using their ideas, pictures and even names in your own brochures and papers must be covered by a specific release of information. These releases, however, do not grant you legal or ethical permission to tell reporters specific details of who you serve. Good reporters seeking feature stories should be able to find people directly and need you only for general program information. You should always be open in your communication with clients, but cautious in discussing details with others. **Client needs and rights are always the first priority**.

Litigation

It is not uncommon to discover that your client is involved in some form of litigation (legal proceedings) to recover for damages suffered through an injury or seeking compensation or benefits from insurance companies or agencies such as workers compensation. If at all possible you and your organisation should remain apart from these proceedings. Taking any position in such proceedings may reflect negatively on you and may even damage your clients case.

Unless ordered by the court your records should never be surrendered to anyone, regardless how well dressed they appear. The contents under most state laws are considered confidential.

If formally requested by the court to appear for testimony (subpoenaed), the information provided should not be such that it will be used against your client. The client should have absolute trust that the information he or she provides you will not be used against them.

It might be a wise policy that no one associated with your program be allowed to participate as a paid consultant in the area served by the program. This would avoid awkward conflicts of interest.

Service Referrals and Forms

As in most programs, you will probably be referring some of your clients to outside agencies or facilities for assistance. The type of information they require varies according to the services your client wants or needs. Formal or informal, detailed or specific, informational or service oriented, these are factors to consider when developing a referral.

Your responsibility for client confidentiality (and possibly your own program parameters) may prevent you from disseminating any client information to outside sources. It is vital that your clients understand and fully accept passing on this very personal information. Just as you need signed release forms for using names, ideas, and pictures in presentations or other materials, you should have a release of information drafted specifically covering referrals. Be sure to have it approved by legal counsel and written in easily understandable terms.

In some instances, you may not be allowed to make a direct referral, or perhaps the intake procedures of the agencies you are using are so complicated and thorough that having the client contact the agency directly is the most efficient method. For some programs unable or unwilling to take on the added responsibility of this type of information, a simple cover letter to the client, outlining the procedure they must follow, is the only logical recourse. The ethical and legal issues involved with informal exchanges of information between service professionals is potentially life threatening to the client-counsellor relationship. It cannot be emphasised strongly enough, it is the client who decides the direction of their case. Please remember, in all instances, to respect their rights. Keep them informed of all your actions, including providing copies of any correspondence you send to others on their behalf.

Service Referral Form

Referral Date: _____/____/____

Name: _____

Address:_____

_____Town:_____

State: _____ Post code: _____

Phone: ( )_____ Fax: ( )_____Email:_____

Date of birth:_____/_____/_____ Sex: (*please circle*) Male/Female

Spouse/Partner's name:_____

Names and ages of children at home:

Age

_____

Age

_____

Age

_____

Primary Disability: _____ Severity: _____

Secondary Disability: _____ Severity: _____

Other Disabilities: _____ Time w/Disability: _____

Functional Limitations: (as described by client)

_____

_____

Primary Income Source: _____

Receiving Social Security Benefits/Workers Compensation: _____

Amount of time receiving benefits: _____Amount Received: _____

Highest Level of Education/Training Received: _____Year Completed _____

Work History: (present situation first)

Title/Company	Mo./Yr.
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Service requested: Contact _____ Appointment _____

Orientation _____ Mail program information _____

Previous client: _____

Referred by: _____ Phone: ( )_____

Address: _____ Town:_____

State: _____ Post Code: _____

PHONE CONTACT WORKSHEET

In an effort to save time, increase accuracy and completeness, a phone contact worksheet was developed. Just as with the examples of assessment tools, this form is by no means the only way of recording contacts. It can, however, act as a guide in developing other forms or serve directly as a format to assist clients/callers in determining what it is they really need or want from your program. It could also go directly to your client files as a record of the first contact.

The form is purposely short as possible and is designed to be used for all contacts with the program, not just clients. By combining parts of the follow-up columns, you should be able to cover most needs for professional and media contacts as well. Space was intentionally left at the top and bottom for date, program, department and time of call, depending on where and how you plan to log and file your contacts.

It will be up to the person taking the call to practice active listening, prompting the caller with appropriate questions. If a client is calling with an extensive problem and it's their first contact, then you as the service provider will most likely want to set an appointment to gather vital information directly. If it is not convenient, then you will need to decide to gather the information in another way. Two possible alternatives are to: a) get as much information from the initial phone call as possible (filling in the worksheet as you go) and get back to them with recommendations based on what you know, or b) pull out the assessment tool of your choice and play word-picture association with your client. Don't forget to pay attention to whoever is paying for the cost of the call. Emails or letters may be better for any large exchange of information.

Phone Contact Worksheet

Name: _____

Address:_____

_____Town:_____

State: _____ Post code: _____

Phone: ( )_____ Fax: ( )_____ Email:_____

Farmer / Farm Owner: _____

Employee:_____

Self-referral: _____Second Party referral: _____

Nature of Enquiry:_____

_____

_____

_____

Description of Disability/Limitation: _____

_____

_____

_____

Follow-up Action/Recommendations:

MAIL	**VISIT/ASSESSMENT**	**REFERRAL**
General Information:_____	Purpose: _____	Vocational Rehab _____
_____	_____	_____
Services Available: _____	_____	Facility: _____
_____	_____	_____
Publications List:_____	_____	_____
_____	When: _____	_____
Products/Modifications:	Where (directions): _____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	Confirm: _____	_____


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