

# Cultivate

FALL 2023

NEWSLETTER OF THE NATIONAL FARM MEDICINE CENTER

## Auction of Champions raises \$266,000

The Marshfield Clinic Health System Foundation is proud to announce that the 2023 Auction of Champions, "Fire and Ice," raised \$266,000 for Farm Medicine and its initiatives. Special thanks to Miron Construction, Inc., Champion Sponsor, for its ongoing commitment to Auction of Champions. More than 260 people attended at RiverEdge Golf Course. This year's Fund-A-Need raised more than \$58,000 to bolster roadway safety and injury prevention. Funds will support the dissemination of Slow-Moving Vehicle (SMV) emblems to enhance the visibility of agricultural vehicles on public roads. Stratford Area Fire Department Chief Tim Carey kicked off the Fund-A-Need by speaking about the importance of SMV emblems. H&S Manufacturing Co., was the presenting sponsor for Fund-A-Need.



 **Marshfield Clinic**  
Research Institute

 **National Farm Medicine Center**



For three days during National Farm Safety and Health Week, Farm Medicine and the National Children's Center had the privilege of hosting visitors from the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH), NIOSH agricultural safety and health centers and external partners in the National Children's Center 2025 National Action Plan.

## Farm Medicine hosts summit during National Farm Safety and Health Week

The National Farm Medicine Center celebrated National Farm Safety and Health Week, Sept. 17 – 23, by hosting a three-day National Ag Centers Safety and Health Summit, culminating in the Auction of Champions, the annual gala benefiting multiple Farm Medicine programs. Summit participants included Jennifer Lincoln, Ph.D., leader of the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) agriculture, forestry, and fishing program. Joining her were representatives from 8 of the 12 NIOSH-funded agricultural safety and health centers based in California, Illinois, Minnesota, Nebraska, New York, Texas, Washington and Wisconsin.

"This was an excellent opportunity to leverage the expertise of these visiting ag safety leaders as we try to ensure the success of all types of agriculture, forestry and commercial fishing now and in the future," said Casper Bendixsen, Ph.D., director of Farm Medicine.

Scientists from Farm Medicine and its largest program, the NIOSH-funded National Children's Center for Rural and Agricultural Health and Safety, facilitated meetings related to children and youth, technology and engineering, injury surveillance, policy, farm workers, and interdisciplinary and cross-institutional work. The agenda included field trips to Norm-E-Lane Farms and H&S Manufacturing Co.

Scientists and staff from several Marshfield Clinic Research Institute centers engaged with the NIOSH visitors to explore possible collaboration, including discussions about occupational industry in the medical record and the relationship between agriculture, the human microbiome and immunology.



Jennifer Lincoln, Ph.D., center-left and K.C. Elliott, center-right, NIOSH, at Norm-E-Lane Farms.



## Child agricultural safety featured in public health journal

[“Safeguarding Youth from Agricultural Injury and Illness: International Perspectives,”](#) edited by the National Children’s Center for Rural and Agricultural Health and Safety, has been published by the open-access journal, *Frontiers in Public Health*. The special issue includes 29 manuscripts from Argentina, Australia, Burkina Faso, Canada, Ireland, Israel, Lithuania,

Nigeria, Sweden, United Kingdom and United States. The special issue can be printed as an e-book. Simply go to the [special issue page](#) and click the “download e-pub” tab. Guest Editor Barbara Lee, Ph.D., assembled a team of scientists from within Farm Medicine and around the world to write and edit this unique collection of papers.



Bryan Weichelt, Ph.D.

## Dr. Weichelt selected NRHA Fellow

Congratulations to **Bryan Weichelt, Ph.D.**, one of 17 individuals selected into the National Rural Health Association’s (NRHA) Rural Health Fellows Program of 2024. The Rural Health Fellows program is a yearlong, intensive training program that develops leaders who can articulate a clear and compelling vision for rural America.

## Farm Foundation, USDA partner with Farm Medicine

More than 300 people representing academia, government agencies, policy makers and the private sector participated in a virtual conference on U.S. Farm Households’ Social and Economic Needs and the Future of Agriculture, Sept. 13. The conference was a collaboration between Farm Medicine, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Farm Foundation, The Ohio State University and Colorado State University. [The conference](#) was designed to bring awareness to the social and economic challenges experienced by farm families, as well as their consequences. U.S. Deputy Secretary of Agriculture Xochitl Torres Small delivered the opening remarks. Farm Medicine Associate Research Scientist Florence Becot was both an organizer and a presenter.



Jeffrey VanWormer, Ph.D.

## Dr. VanWormer named Sebold honoree

**Jeffrey VanWormer, Ph.D.**, a research scientist at Marshfield Clinic Research Institute, was named recipient of the 2023 Gwen D. Sebold Fellowship, which annually recognizes an outstanding medical researcher and supports their research. VanWormer, interim director of the Research Institute’s Center for Clinical Epidemiology &

Population Health, has extended his work into agricultural safety and health. He is principal investigator on an injury surveillance project with the National Children’s Center for Rural and Agricultural Health and Safety, and an associate editor with the Journal of Agromedicine.

## Farm Medicine hosts 3 summer interns

Farm Medicine mentored three university students this past summer as part of the annual Marshfield Clinic Research Institute Summer Research Internship Program. The program provides real-world experience for undergraduate and graduate students considering a career involving research. The program enables students to put their education into practice as they work side-by-side with scientists and clinician-researchers who are experts in their fields.

- **An assessment of farm families’ lived realities raising children on farms.** Scotia Dettweiler (law student from Vermont Law and Graduate School), mentored by Florence Becot, Ph.D.
- **Keeping children safe on the farm: What kinds of solutions do farm parents want?** Katherine Morrissey (graduate student from the University of Vermont), mentored by Florence Becot, Ph.D.
- **Diseases of Despair in rural and farm families in Wisconsin.** Matthew Wieckhorst (graduate student from Grand Valley State University, Michigan), mentored by Bryan Weichelt, Ph.D. and Jeff VanWormer, Ph.D.

## Project studies occupational links to health

Marshfield Clinic Health System patients are now being asked about the industries and jobs in which they work in order to better diagnose and treat them. “We will be one of the few health systems in the country equipped to examine health data in light of someone’s work,” said **Casper Bendixsen, Ph.D.**, director of Farm Medicine. “In agricultural communities, this will impact how and to whom we deliver valuable safety and wellness knowledge, but also shed light on health trends, such as the types and rates of cancers, respiratory diseases, and Parkinson’s disease in the farming population.”

## Furthermore

Fire departments from across Wisconsin participated in the third annual **Agriculture Rescue Training**, Oct. 20 – 21 in Marshfield. Farm Medicine partnered with Pittsville Fire Company, Life Link III, Heiman’s Holsteins, Heeg Farms Inc., and Marshfield Clinic Health System in presenting the training, which is designed to supplement basic emergency responder training. 🌱 National Children’s Center staff engaged with more than 1,300 students and teachers at the **National FFA conference**, Nov. 1 – 4, in Indianapolis. 🌱 **Florence Becot, Ph.D.**, has accepted the Nationwide Insurance Endowed Professorship of Agricultural Safety and Health at Penn State University. Farm Medicine has a long history of collaboration with Penn State and looks forward to continuing to work with Dr. Becot. 🌱 **Bryan Weichelt, Ph.D.**, and **Marsha Salzwedel, Ed.D.**, have successfully competed for internally funded research awards from Marshfield Clinic Research Institute. Dr. Weichelt’s project will assess veterans’ knowledge and utilization of earned benefits, programs and services, and Dr. Salzwedel has been funded to conduct an injury assessment and development of an injury prevention intervention for the Anabaptist community. 🌱 Support for the **Wisconsin Infant Study Cohort (WISC)** has been renewed through both a National Institutes of Health cooperative agreement and now the NIH Environmental Influences on Child Health Outcomes (ECHO) program. This support will allow Farm Medicine and a multi-departmental Marshfield Clinic Research Institute research team to follow the health outcomes of farm and non-farm youth in central Wisconsin from in utero until some youths’ 16th birthdays. 🌱 **Melissa Ploeckelman**, Farm Medicine outreach specialist, was elected to the International Society for Agricultural Safety and Health Board of Directors by a vote of membership. 🌱

## Our Mission

“With the ultimate goal of improving human health, wellbeing and safety of rural and agricultural communities, the National Farm Medicine Center acts as a national resource by conducting high quality research, developing and delivering health and safety information, exploring innovative intervention models, and leading initiatives and networks.”

Cultivate is published twice annually by the National Farm Medicine Center, Marshfield, WI. Contact: 1-800-662-6900, [nfmcsh@marshfieldresearch.org](mailto:nfmcsh@marshfieldresearch.org), [www.marshfieldresearch.org/nfmc](http://www.marshfieldresearch.org/nfmc)

