

# FARM MOBILITY: SELECTING A UTILITY TERRAIN VEHICLE (UTV)



Photo: Abbie Spackman / AgrAbility PA / Penn State

**A disability or long-term health condition can greatly impact a farmer's mobility on the farm. There are many types of Utility Terrain Vehicles (UTVs) that can help a farmer regain or maintain their independence.**

**When investing in a UTV, it is important to select the correct option based on the individual's functional capabilities, farm environment, and farm tasks.**

A UTV can be an excellent choice for certain farm environments and tasks, however, there are many things to take into consideration when selecting one.

**It is not one-size-fits-all:** different types of brands, makes, and models should be considered. Test driving several UTVs prior to purchasing one is highly recommended.

**When testing and selecting a UTV, consider:**

- **Cab with Environmental Controls**
  - Do you have a medical condition that causes hypersensitivity to heat and cold? If so, a UTV with a cab, heat, and air conditioning is worth consideration.
- **Door Handles & Door Hinges**
  - Do you have functional limitations in your hands or upper extremities? Door handles on UTVs range from push button to twist levers. Be sure to select a type that is easy to open. Some UTV doors hinge from the back while others hinge from the front. This makes a difference on how you enter the cab and can impact accessibility.
- **Seating**
  - Bench, bucket, and split seats all affect access and comfort.



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• **Safety Grab Bar**

- These bars can assist with access (or hinder) depending on the location of the bars and your mobility.

• **Operation Controls**

- Are you able to operate the controls? Will the controls require modification, such as hand controls? Select a model that will require the least amount of modifications. Always follow safety guidelines when operating a UTV. Obtain driver training if needed, especially when modifications are made to the operation controls.

**Additional features to consider include** manual or electric dump bed, height of cargo bed, tilt steering wheel, power windshield wiper, cargo bed features, and attachment capabilities or special features, such as a PTO connection.

**AgrAbility PA is able to perform an on-site farm assessment and offer assistance in selecting a UTV.** AgrAbility PA does not provide direct funding for assistive technology such as a UTV, however, the AgrAbility PA staff can suggest potential funding resources. Farmers with a disability or long-term health condition may be eligible for funding through the Pennsylvania Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR), Pennsylvania Assistive Technology Foundation (PATF), or other third-party funding sources.

“ It is important to test out multiple UTVs. Many farmers are surprised that they find one model was easier to access or operate over another. It's often the opposite of what they originally thought. ”

– Abbie Spackman,  
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