

# FUNDING AGRICULTURAL ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY



**Assistive Technology (AT) for use in agricultural settings can look like many different things. The key is how it relates to helping a person overcome barriers related to a disability or long-term health condition.**

**Examples of Agricultural AT include:**

- 1. Cab cameras for increasing vision and safety**
- 2. Grain bin level indicators to improve independence**
- 3. Mobility lifts to restore equipment access**
- 4. Ergonomic steps and handrails to aid in safe accessibility**
- 5. Automatic takeoffs to aid in milking routines**
- 6. Garden seat for accessible and ergonomic gardening**

**AT solutions are unique to each person, their disability, and type of agricultural operation.** AgrAbility PA provides on-site assessments that help determine what modifications, equipment, and resources are needed to support a farmer returning to or continuing to work in agriculture.

**Assistive technology can be anything that helps a person with a disability or functional limitation perform a task.**

## Definition of Assistive Technology

**Any item, piece of equipment, or product system – whether acquired commercially off the shelf, modified, or customized – that is used to increase, maintain, or improve functional capabilities of individuals with disabilities.**

[20 U.S.C. Chapter 33,  
Section 1401 (25)]





This farmer purchased a side-entry skid loader by applying for and receiving a low-interest loan through the Pennsylvania Assistive Technology Foundation (PATF). This piece of equipment allows for greater accessibility and safety.



This farmer acquired a pull-behind Eco Weeder by applying for occupational support services with the Pennsylvania Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR). This piece of equipment allows the farmer to work ergonomically with less pain.

**One of the main barriers to implementing assistive technology on the farm can be the cost to pay for it.**

**To be successful in obtaining financial assistance:**

- 1)** Set clear goals
- 2)** Explore various funding resources
- 3)** Keep records and documentation
- 4)** Be persistent and act as your own self-advocate
- 5)** Follow-up and ask questions.

**Steps towards funding Agricultural AT include:**

1. **Determine** the type of AT for a person's individual needs.
2. **Test** or try out the AT before purchasing (if possible).
3. **Locate** a vendor and obtain the cost or estimate of the AT.
4. **Determine** if there is any alternative AT to consider due to cost or availability without sacrificing function or features.
5. **Assess** how much contribution (out of pocket) can be made towards the purchase.
6. **Identify** funding resources. More than one funding source may be used for an AT purchase(s).
7. **Apply** for funding, follow the process, and keep records and documentation.

**Funding Resources**

- State Funding
- Federal Funding
- Private Funding
- Financial Institutions
- Grant Programs

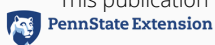
**AgrAbility PA does not provide funding for assistive technology.**

The staff is available to help a farmer identify solutions, offer support, and assist with finding funding resources.

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AgrAbility for Pennsylvanians is a statewide partnership between Penn State Extension and UCP Central PA.

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