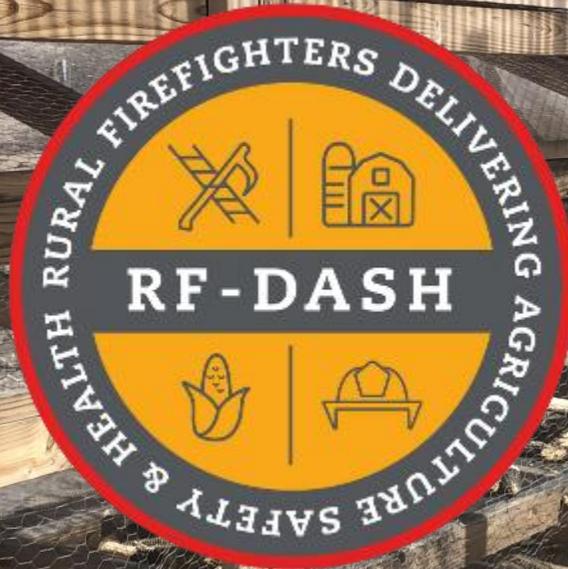


RF-DASH Newsletter



The First Training of 2024

April/May 2024
Issue #12

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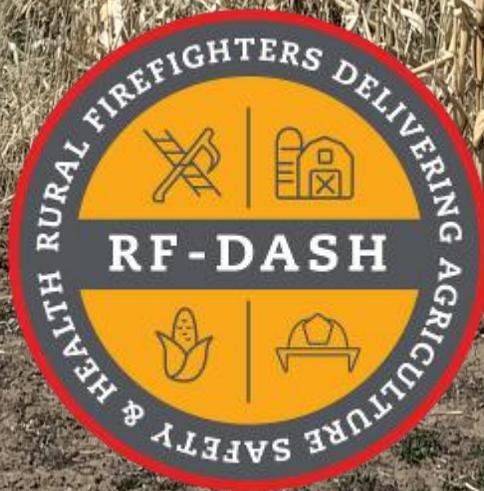
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Upcoming Condensed-Format RF-DASH Training in Baldwin, Wisconsin on July 15, 2024

On July 15, 2024, the RF-DASH team based at the National Farm Medicine Center (NFMC) will provide an RF-DASH Training at United Fire and Rescue in Baldwin, Wisconsin.

This training is condensed in format. It will take place from 6-9PM on a Monday night to better accommodate firefighter schedules in the area. We hope to bring many new first responders to RF-DASH. Because the training is condensed in format, first responders previously trained in RF-DASH are also strongly encouraged to attend in order to 'refresh' their knowledge. All participants will be provided with improved and updated RF-DASH materials and swag (challenge coin and patch).

The training will cover the five core RF-DASH modules, including demonstrations of Farm MAPPER and SaferFarm. The training will not include an in-person farm walk-through. United Fire & Rescue and River Falls Fire Department will be holding their own farm walk-throughs, led by prior RF-DASH trainees, over the following weeks. The RF-DASH team will strongly encourage all other participants to practice pre-planning and hazard

analysis using FarmMAPPER and SaferFarm in their own departments.

This training is a part of the Evidence to Implementation (E2I) grant that the RF-DASH program received from the University of Wisconsin Institute for Clinical and Translational Research (ICTR) to conduct or assist with a series of trainings across the state of Wisconsin. The novelty of the training is its condensed format, with the hands-on portion taking place at a separate time or individually. This model increases the flexibility of RF-DASH trainings, and the capacity of the RF-DASH team to respond to training requests in Wisconsin.

More information about the upcoming RF-DASH Refresher Training can be found at the following link: <https://rfdash.org/upcomingtraining/>.



By Jakob Hanschu, Research Specialist at the National Farm Medicine Center

RF-DASH Training

July 15, 2024 | 6-9PM

United Fire & Rescue

1580 10th Ave.

Baldwin, WI 54002



Register Now!



https://redcap.link/rf-dash_baldwin

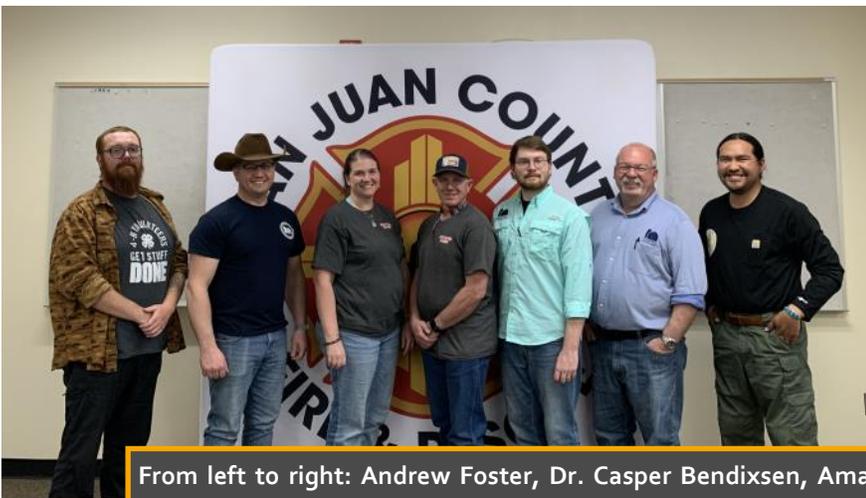
Spotlight Story

RF-DASH Training in New Mexico

In late 2023, the Rural Firefighters Delivering Agricultural Safety and Health (RF-DASH) project team received a community request for training in northwestern New Mexico near Shiprock. The request was made by a Diné Navajo farmer and community activist, Zachariah Ben. Zachariah and his wife Mary farm and operate Bidii Baby Foods, LLC and are working to reduce risk for farmers, law enforcement and fire/EMS in the region.

Zach and Mary quickly connected the RF-DASH team with Andrew Foster, program coordinator for New Mexico State University Extension's Growing Forward Farm in Aztec, NM. Zach, Mary, and Andrew worked together with the RF-DASH team to organize an RF-DASH training at Growing Forward Farm on March 30th, 2024.

The RF-DASH team contacted two prior trainees based in Utah, Justin and Amanda Norr (featured in [Newsletter #10](#)), to help deliver part of the training. Master Trainers Casper Bendixsen, PhD (Director, National Farm Medicine Center) and Jerry Minor (Fire Chief, Pittsville, WI) and staff member Jakob Hanschu also assisted in delivering the training.



From left to right: Andrew Foster, Dr. Casper Bendixsen, Amanda Norr, Justin Norr, Jakob Hanschu, Jerry Minor, Zachariah Ben.

The training included participants from the local San Juan County Fire Department, a firefighter from Los Pinos Fire Protection District in Colorado, several local farmers, and safety officers from Navajo Agricultural Products Industry (an agricultural collective of more than 100,000 acres).

In addition to the five normal RF-DASH modules, the training also included an active shooter module modified for agricultural areas (see page 5), a STOP THE BLEED training conducted by the Norrs, and a roundtable discussion. The purpose of the roundtable was to bring farmers and firefighters together in conversations about local emergency incidents and how to best prevent and/or prepare for them.

There were several aspects of this training that made it unique among prior RF-DASH trainings. First, the training represents the first time that the RF-DASH program has ventured into the southwestern United States. The landscapes, hazards, and kinds of agriculture present there are quite different than those of the Midwest. To quote Dorothy from *The Wizard of Oz*, the RF-DASH team got the sense that, "We're not in Kansas anymore."

A second unique aspect of the training was the involvement of kinds of agricultural operations that RF-DASH hadn't worked closely with. Growing Forward Farm is a small Extension education farm without large machinery or livestock.

Agritourism was a much more significant part of this operation

RF-DASH

than those RF-DASH had conducted trainings at previously. NAPI was by far the largest farm operation to have participated in an RF-DASH training, covering not hundreds, not thousands, but more than a hundred thousand acres. Bidii Baby Foods, whose corn drying racks are seen on the front of this newsletter, also had underground ovens used for traditionally roasting harvested corn before turning it into baby food. Further, this training provided the opportunity for the RF-DASH team to adapt their materials and curriculum to agriculture and emergency response efforts on tribal lands, which often involve unique jurisdictional issues. As Zach Ben noted about the training:

"As a rural farm located on Tribal Trust Land, we often experience gaps in services or jurisdictional red tape, which puts us at increased risk. Bringing our tribal and county first responders together for RF-DASH has the potential to not only improve technical knowledge to mitigate safety threats, but also improve communication and partnership to respond more effectively and collaboratively."

The third unique aspect of the training was that it was the first time the RF-DASH core team relied on trainees to assist with the delivery of a training. It was great to see the train-the-trainer model in action and Justin and Amanda were superb instructors.



Aerial image of Bidii Baby Farm, showcasing the unique landscape. (Photo Credit: Zach Ben)

The training was undeniably a success, due in large part to the enthusiasm of our New Mexico community partners and prior RF-DASH trainees. The combination of an energetic farm community, committed extension personnel, and local first responders trained in the RF-DASH curriculum make New Mexico well set-up for continuing to grow the RF-DASH program. NMSU Extension expressed a keen interest in growing the RF-DASH program across the state and has contacted Casper and Jakob about giving a presentation to a wider audience. It will be exciting to see what comes from these partnerships!

By Jakob Hanschu, Research Specialist at
the National Farm Medicine Center



RF-DASH participants gather in a roundtable discussion. Topics focused on local emergency prevention issues. It was an excellent opportunity to learn how RF-DASH might adapt to better serve the needs of different communities.

Bringing RF-DASH to Insurance Companies

Throughout its existence, RF-DASH program staff and researchers have thought about whether or not the RF-DASH program could be widely promoted by insurance companies. To date, little has been done to formally explore this avenue of program dissemination. The RF-DASH team has recently begun looking into ways to pitch the RF-DASH program to insurance companies.

There are several reasons that the RF-DASH team has chosen to explore the possibility of RF-DASH being widely promoted by insurance agencies. First, we were recently notified by one of our trainees that an insurance company in west-central Wisconsin near the Mississippi River had required a couple farms that it insured to have the local fire department complete a hazard analysis of the farm prior to renewing the policy for those farms. Second, RF-DASH team members have been in communication with members of the National

Volunteer Fire Council, the National Fire Administration, and the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) Public Safety Program about how to ensure the long-term sustainability of the RF-DASH program. One of the topics that emerged from these meetings was how community risk reduction efforts like RF-DASH could be pitched to insurance companies as a way of possibly lowering the risk inherent in their portfolios, potentially reducing premium rates for entire rural communities.

The RF-DASH team is just beginning to explore the ways RF-DASH could be 'marketed' to insurance companies and as a win-win-win-win situation for firefighters, farmers, rural communities, and insurance companies.

By Jakob Hanschu, Research Specialist at
the National Farm Medicine Center

An Active Shooter Module for RF-DASH

As a part of the RF-DASH training that recently took place in Aztec, New Mexico, RF-DASH trainers adapted [existing active shooter training materials](#) to the agricultural setting. We did this because a farmer local to the area informed us that he had experienced a situation where a gunman was chased by police through his operation. The farmer asked if we had any materials relevant to that event. While it may seem like an outlier, violent situations are becoming increasingly common across rural America.

RF-DASH does not currently include active shooter content, so we reviewed existing government and emergency management center materials about what to do in an active shooter situation. Our preliminary research revealed that there were few

resources and/or informational materials about what to do in the event of an active shooter situation in a rural area, and essentially none about what to do when the situation involves an armed individual on an agricultural operation. Moreover, most active shooter materials that rely on some iteration of the "Run, Hide, Fight" formula assume an enclosed urban building setting. Thus, our adaptation of active shooter materials was a first effort to fill what we have identified as a gap in active shooter recommendations and materials. This is an effort in progress, and we welcome any insights that our prior RF-DASH trainees may be able to provide on this topic.

By Jakob Hanschu, Research Specialist at
the National Farm Medicine Center

RF-DASH Resources Reminder

The RF-DASH team wanted to remind folks that there are many resources freely available to download, save, and print on the 'Resources' page of the RF-DASH website (<https://rfdash.org/resources/>). The materials on this page are handy if you're looking to promote the program, host your own training, or simply spread the word about RF-DASH. They will be updated as possible. Resources include:

- Training Materials
 - Training Manual coming SOON!
 - Slides and print outs for RF-DASH modules 1-5.
 - RF-DASH media guidelines ([link](#)).
 - Additional farm first aid scenarios from Penn State.
- Informational Materials
 - RF-DASH info sheets for US ([link](#)) and Canada ([link](#)).
 - RF-DASH brochure ([link](#)).
 - Farm MAPPER flyer ([link](#)).
 - Safer Farm flyer ([link](#)).
- Resources
 - Customizable RF-DASH business card ([link](#)).
 - Directory of fellow RF-DASH trainers ([link](#)).
 - RF-DASH posters ([link](#) & [link](#)).
 - List of the top hazards to watch for on farms ([link](#)).
- RF-DASH Newsletter
 - All previous RF-DASH newsletters.
- Training Videos
 - Video overviews of modules 1-5 as well as an introduction to the Safer Farm tool.



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