



Easter Seals Iowa

# Rural Solutions Program

## Program Overview

The Rural Solutions program provides a unique service to Iowa farm family members **not available through any other entity in the state of Iowa**. Founded by Easter Seals Iowa in 1986, the program has received national and state awards and has been replicated in over 30 states around the country.

## Farm Families Served in Past 25 years

1,868 Iowa farm family members with disabilities, from all 99 counties, have been served since the start of the program. Due to changes in the farming operation or one's abilities, oftentimes farm family members are served numerous times throughout the years of living and farming with a disability.

## Farm Families Served FY 10/11

In fiscal year 2010/11 the program supported 106 farm family members; 82 males and 24 females.

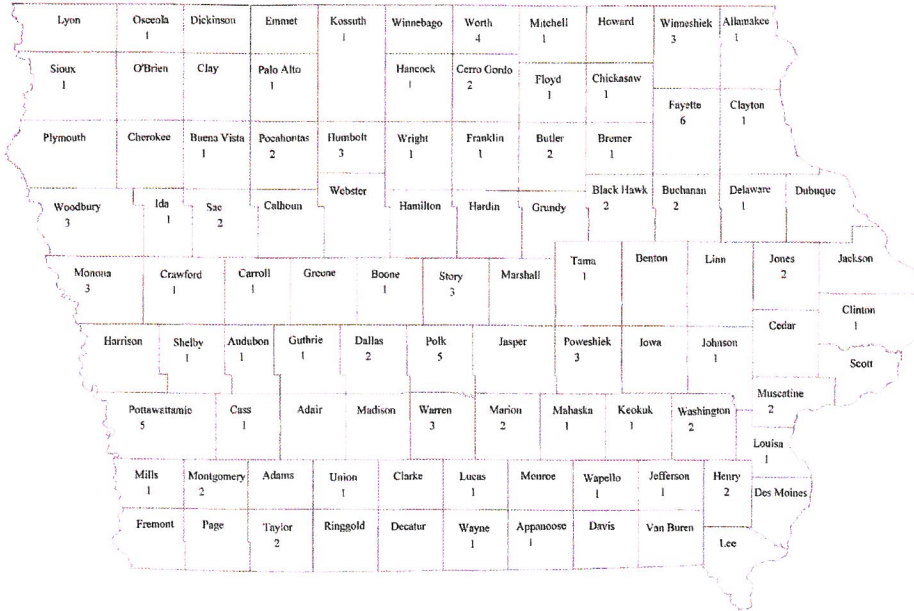
### Age of Farm Family Members Supported FY 10/11



“I harvested in the fall of 2011 with my modified combine because of the help of the Rural Solutions Program. I wanted nothing more than to get on my combine again after my stroke. And, with Easter Seals it became a reality.”

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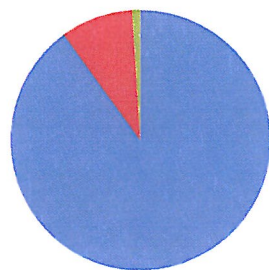
*Rural Solutions  
Persons Served 2010-2011*



## Program Financial Overview FY 10/11

In addition to state allocated dollars, the program is supported through the Easter Seals Annual Fund, along with Easter Seals events including: Crop for Camp, Walk with Me, and the Sunnyside Regatta. Additionally, in the last seven years, designated gifts to Rural Solutions have been received from the following organizations/businesses: Farmers National Company, FBL Financial Group, Iowa Farm Bureau, Jasper County Farm Bureau Women, John Deere Des Moines Works, Legend Seeds, Nationwide, Pioneer Hi-Bred, and Warren County Farm Bureau Women's Group.

## Percentage of Overall Program Budget FY 10/11



- Employee Compensation
- Vehicle/Travel
- Expenses
- Program Supplies/Misc.



## Staffing

90% of the overall program budget is for employee compensation. The funding provides for three FT and one PT staff, with over 55 years of combined experience with the disability community.

## Legislative Funding History

**FY07-FY09 Funding:** \$130,000

**FY10 Funding:** \$108,000

**FY10 Funding after Executive order:** \$97,200

**FY11 Funding:** \$97,000

## Funding Request FY12

The state allocated funding request is \$130,000 for FY12. In order to maintain quality services throughout the state that meet the needs of rural lowans, the overall program budget projections for FY 11/12 is \$150,000.

## Program Impact



“When I was newly disabled, Rural Solutions offered me hope and encouragement, that I too could be a productive part of society after acquiring a disability. With the support of this program, I am doing just that; working, volunteering, and enjoying life to the fullest.”

“Without the technological assistance from Easter Seals, I couldn’t have continued to farm. I am so thankful to continue to do what I love.”



“I needed a reason – a purpose to wake-up every day. Easter Seals helped me make this possible”



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- The Rural Solutions program provides a unique service to Iowa farmers ***not available through any other entity in the state of Iowa***. Founded by Easter Seals Iowa in 1986, the program has received national and state awards and has been replicated in 30 states around the country.
- For farm family members with a newly acquired disability, Rural Solutions offers them often the only hope they have to return to farming. This program allows the farmer to continue to be gainfully employed, taxpaying citizens.
- Since the program's inception, Rural Solutions has served more than 1,868 Iowa farmers with disabilities, from all 99 counties, making it possible for them – and their families – to continue farming.
- Rural Solutions serves farmers throughout the state of Iowa. In fiscal year 2010-2011 the program supported 106 farm family members. In the last seven years, 869 Iowans have been served by Easter Seals Rural Solutions representing 93 of Iowa's 99 counties.
- Rural Solutions program directly serves Iowa farm family members. Specifically, it helps Iowa farmers and their families with disabilities return to farming by making modifications in their farm equipment and homes so that they can continue to make a living by farming.
- Program components include: agricultural worksite and home modifications consultations, peer support services, services for the family, information and referral, and equipment loan services.
- Unlike clients with disabilities served in our other programs, most farmers served by this program acquired their disability through some type of accident, injury, or medical illness as opposed to being born with a disability.
- Secondary injuries are very common among farmers who have disabilities, many of whom “make do” rather than seek professional guidance on how to safely continue their operations. Easter Seals' Rural Solutions program also has a safety education component that teaches farm family members with disabilities how to prevent secondary injuries.
- Because of funding considerations, staffing consists of three full-time professionals and one part time professional who cover the entire state.
- By keeping farm family members gainfully employed farming, some of the benefits to Iowa are: Persons remain in their home and are not placed in more costly long-term living arrangements, farmers remain gainfully employed and continue to be tax paying citizens, and the benefits of the farmers and their families being engaged in their local communities.



