

Farm Rescue™



Reputable & Ready

FISCAL YEAR 2023 ANNUAL REPORT

A Helping Hand, NOT a Handout

Mission

Facing a setback? Wondering how you're going to do this? Feeling overwhelmed?

Farm Rescue helps farmers experiencing a crisis – a major injury, illness, or natural disaster. We give families the chance to keep going by providing them with the necessary equipment and the labor (free of charge) to get essential farm jobs done.

How We Help

- Planting & Harvesting
- Hay Baling & Transport
- Livestock Feeding Assistance

President's Letter to You

Momentum

After 18 years of assisting over 1,000 farm families, Farm Rescue is a force for good in 8 states and counting. Together with our 300+ skilled volunteers, 9 staff members, and 1,700+ donors/sponsors, local farmers and ranchers get through impossible times, communities thrive, and all of us are better for it!

FY2023 Highlights

Below are the achievements all of us associated with Farm Rescue can be proud of this past year:

- **Increased sponsorship revenue by 72%.**
To serve farm families in Illinois, we recruited new sponsors like Nutrien Ag Solutions and Wyffels Hybrids, to expand our staff, volunteers, equipment, and logistics.
- **Increased trained volunteers by 30%.**
To offset volunteer retirements, expanded geography and farm cases, Farm Rescue recruited and trained 35 qualified equipment operators.
- **Completed 5 cases in Illinois** – this was our first year in that state! (See p. 9 for how we refer to our expanding service areas.)
- **Added field operations support.** Ben Smith, Field Operations Manager joined us to coordinate cases, equipment, and volunteers as well as conduct outreach activities in the Midwest.
- **Generated more awareness.** We ramped up our community efforts, attending 21 trade shows and 15 events. We also had a major increase in social media exposure through several major agricultural YouTube influencers – [Millennial Farmer](#), [aTrippyFarmer](#), [Laura Farms](#), [Peterson Farm Brothers](#), [Sonne Farms](#), and [IOWANFarmer](#).



Good for Business

Being a Farm Rescue sponsor is a win, win, win! The Community is strengthened, and it benefits businesses. Plus, employees, friends, and families become more connected to each other and the land. You gain a sense of purpose.

- **Let's Grow.** There's more good to be done! Once again, we'll be looking for additional and expanded partnerships so we can start serving Wisconsin farm families in FY2025.
- **Household Name.** We want every community in every state we're in to know about Farm Rescue. This will mean even more tradeshows, events, and outreach in 2024. We want farmers to know they can apply, and that we will do the job with excellence and professionalism.
- **Increased Participation.** We invite our sponsors and their employees to be Farm Rescue ambassadors, thus raising awareness of our services to farm families in need of assistance.

**Join us as a donor, sponsor, or volunteer to help us give someone a hand up.
It's the right thing to do for our neighbors.**

Sincerely,

Bill Gross,
Farm Rescue President & Founder

“It’s hard for us to accept help because we never had to ask for it before.”



SEE THE STORY

**1,000th
FARM CASE**



The Pifer Family

Palestine, IL • Winter Wheat Harvesting

Farmers know weather – sometimes too well. In March 2023, an uncharacteristic and strong EF3 tornado all but destroyed the Pifers’ farmstead. Without functional harvesting equipment, much less grain storage, and a home wiped off its foundation, the Pifers contacted Farm Rescue.

“I don’t know how long it’s going to take to feel normal. We’ll just keep doing what we do every day,” says Brad Pifer.

When the Farm Rescue volunteers came in with sophisticated John Deere machinery to harvest the wheat, the family thought “the calvary was showing up.”

“The gratitude we have for all the people who came to help us, for Farm Rescue being here, there is nothing we can do to repay them for the big hearts that they have,” said Karen Pifer, Brad’s mother.



“I don’t know how long it’s going to take to feel normal. We’ll just keep doing what we do every day.”

– Brad Pifer



MEET 3 ANGELS IN BLUE

Farm Rescue's nationwide network of almost 370 volunteers are dedicated to helping farm families in 8 states. They put in the sweat, skill, and service.

93% of Farm Rescue families gave us 4s and above for their satisfaction level on a 5-point scale with 5 being the highest.



Alan Bryce – 7 years

“I farmed my whole life. I think with Farm Rescue being out there, we’re able to help out, and that’s what we need to be doing.” Al got a commercial driver’s license to ensure he can best help whether operating a combine, tractor, or semi.



SEE AL'S STORY



Ron Donohue – 5 years

“I’ve been in the agricultural industry my whole life. Even before I retired, I was volunteering with Farm Rescue. I just love it. I love being able to help other farmers and do the best job possible for them.”



SEE RON'S
STORY



Chester Arnold – 3 years

“There’s always a need because farm accidents are so violent. It’s just something that God laid on my heart to help people. There’s a lot of local need. If farmers don’t plant, we don’t eat. It’s so fulfilling. We get to play with toys, and we get to help people all the time.”



SEE CHESTER'S
STORY

100% of Farm Rescue volunteer survey respondents said their 2023 experience was rewarding and worthwhile and that they plan to volunteer again.

“They don’t know me. I don’t know them and yet they’re coming to help. **It’s amazing.**”



SEE THE STORY



Clifford & Karen Frosli

Rothsay, MN - Corn Harvesting

Self-sufficiency is a farmer’s credo, but cancer doesn’t care about that. Clifford and Karen Frosli grow wheat, soybeans, and corn. In 2020, Clifford had prostate cancer, and when he beat it, he thought he was done with it. Yet, in 2023, cancer came back. This time in his esophagus and stomach.

He jokes that cancer treatment is like having a second job since he was getting radiation 5 days a week and chemotherapy one day a week.

If he was lucky, he’d still get in a half day of work on the farm. Nonetheless, he was getting behind on his harvest and didn’t want to infringe upon his neighbors.

“There’s a line between stubborn and stupid, and I didn’t want to be on the stupid side,” he admits. So, he consented to one of his daughters contacting Farm Rescue.

The team efficiently got all 225 acres of his corn in and hauled it to the grain elevator.

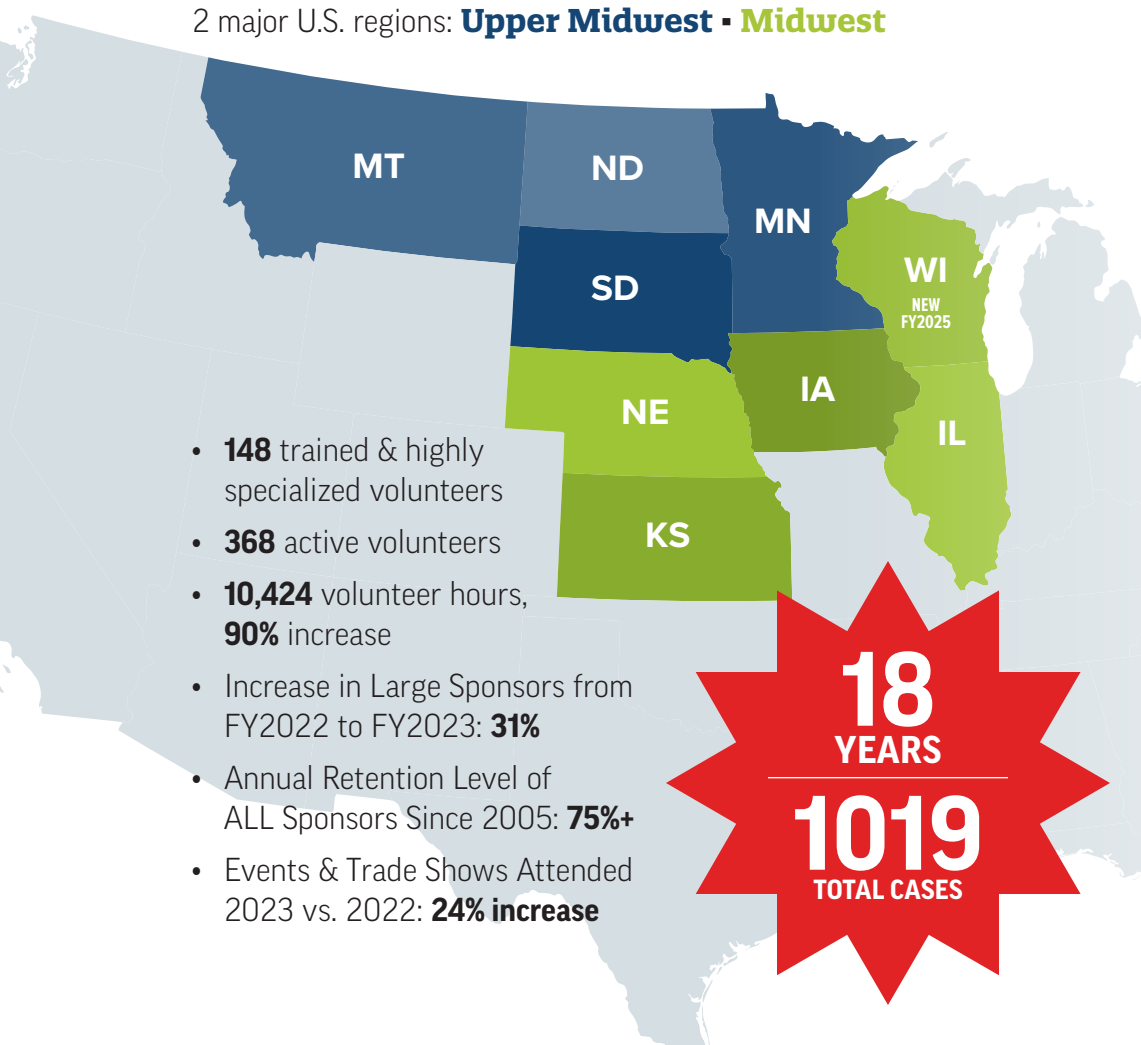


“There’s a line between stubborn and stupid, and I didn’t want to be on the stupid side.”

- Clifford Froslic

Key FY2023 Metrics & Accomplishments

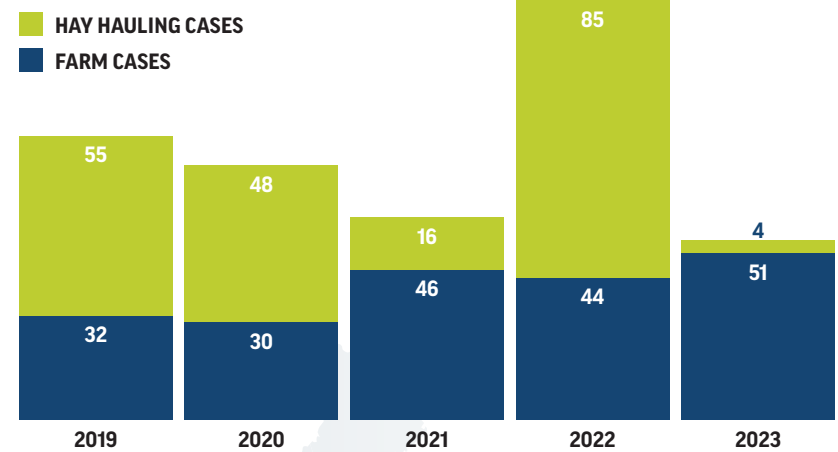
With a growing service area, here's how we now refer to the 2 major U.S. regions: **Upper Midwest** • **Midwest**



- **148** trained & highly specialized volunteers
- **368** active volunteers
- **10,424** volunteer hours, **90%** increase
- Increase in Large Sponsors from FY2022 to FY2023: **31%**
- Annual Retention Level of ALL Sponsors Since 2005: **75%+**
- Events & Trade Shows Attended 2023 vs. 2022: **24% increase**

18
YEARS
1019
TOTAL CASES

Total Farm Families Supported by Year



Total Cases in 2023 = 55



Farm Cases

- Complex service for planting, harvesting, baling, or feeding livestock
- Typically requires transporting multiple pieces of farm equipment
- Several volunteers needed
- Extended stays and work durations



Hay Hauling

- Simpler service for hauling feed
- Common need during a natural disaster (i.e., drought, flood, tornado)
- Usually one semi-truck and one volunteer per hay hauling case
- Work often completed in one day

Equipment

More territory to cover means more equipment must be ready! Our equipment list expanded 40% in FY2023, through purchases, leasing, and in-kind support from certain sponsors. To ensure we maximize farmers' yields and account for work productivity, we continually invest in upgrading our equipment.

Thanks to additional funding and our sponsors' generous in-kind support, we added:

- 1 air seeder
- 1 corn/bean planter
- 2 combines
- 2 drapers
- Two 12-row cornheads
- One 4-wheel 9-series tractor
- One 8-series tractor
- 2 semis
- 1 low-boy trailer
- 2 step deck trailers
- 2 header trailers

Equipment Grand Total:

60 tractors, combines, specialized equipment, vehicles, semis, and trailers



“I realized, wow, I’m homeless. You hear about Farm Rescue and never expect to need them at your place and when you do, it’s amazing how fast the wheels get turning.”



SEE THE STORY



Whetstine Family

Wellman, IA - Tillage & Planting

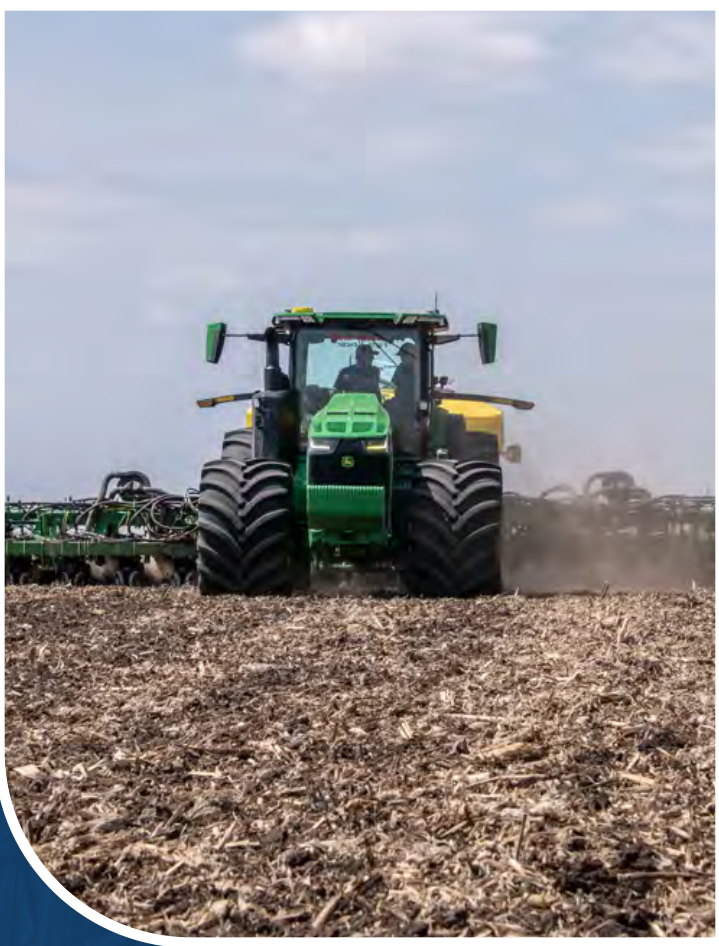
The Whetstines were another farming family affected by the March 31, 2023, tornadic storms that pummeled the region. While Clint, his wife, son, daughter, visiting friends, granddaughter, and their 2 dogs all successfully sheltered in their basement, the raging EF4 tornado devoured their house. They emerged to emergency workers and an altered reality.

Their uncle Ed’s farm, their main base of operations, also suffered the same fate as their property. Within mere minutes, 2/3 of the Whetstine farmsteads, cultivated over 5 generations, were destroyed. One storm, multiple families upended.

“There’s no buildings standing here. There’s dead livestock everywhere,” Clint struggles with the memory.

Clint’s sister, Becca Bohnsack, who has graciously produced Farm Rescue’s Annual Brochure for many years as a dedicated volunteer, convinced the family to apply to Farm Rescue for tillage and planting support. Plus, his association with Wyffels as a seed representative also familiarized him with Farm Rescue’s services.

“We got Farm Rescue in, and, boy, that was kind of a lifesaver. At least we’ll get a crop in and get a little normal going on,” Clint says.



“We got Farm Rescue in, and, boy, that was kind of a lifesaver. At least we’ll get a crop in and get a little normal going on.”

- Clint Whetstine

Looking Ahead

By 2025, we will expand our Midwest presence into Wisconsin, America's Dairyland!
In addition, we remain committed to ALL of our service areas! (See p. 9.)



What Success Looks Like in 2024

- **Increase sponsorship revenue by another 15%.** Wisconsin is our next place to help farm families, and that requires additional equipment and operations efforts.
- **Add additional staff member.** Our Angels in Blue need more volunteer administrative support as more people join us to help farm families in need. [Update – we have hired Jennifer Theurer, as our new Field Operations Support Assistant].
- **Increase trained volunteers and team leads by 15%.** We look forward to training additional team leads and volunteers to operate efficiently and independently, as our staff covers more geography and farm cases.
- **Continue to increase awareness.** We want farm families to know and trust Farm Rescue in all our regions so that if something happens, we make your short list of solutions.

Farm Rescue™

HELPING FARM FAMILIES IN CRISIS



“Everybody in their lifetime ends up with a hardship one time or another. **And, it’s really nice that Farm Rescue is there to help us farmers out.**”



SEE THE STORY



Hettwer Family

Munich, ND - Wheat Harvesting

Things change in the blink of an eye. Nick Hettwer, Sr.’s terrible fall from a grain truck threatened to sideline the father-and-son farming operation. Nick Sr. broke 12 ribs and fractured his pelvis. It would be 3 months before he would work again.

Of course, this is too long to wait to finish a harvest and too much to ask of friends and neighbors. What’s to be done? The Hettwers contacted Farm Rescue!

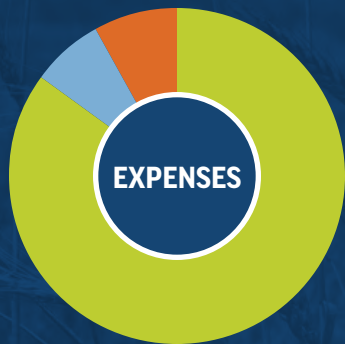
Farm Rescue paid attention to the morning dew and how that would affect the ideal time to start harvesting each day. No detail is overlooked. We do it exactly how you would: with humility, compassion, and respect.



We do it exactly how you would: with humility, compassion, and respect.

Fierce & Frugal

As a credible non-profit, Farm Rescue conscientiously manages our finances. While a gold standard for charities is to spend 75% of their budget on programs, Farm Rescue allocated 85% to planting, haying, harvesting, and livestock feeding in FY2023.



REVENUES	FY2021	FY2022	FY2023	%
◆ Grants (Unrestricted & released from Restrictions)	\$135,832	\$1,037,999	\$209,500	6%
◆ Sponsorships (in-kind equipment, tires, services)	\$1,217,690	\$666,629	\$421,408	12%
◆ Sponsorships (Corporate \$\$)	\$755,154	\$754,515	\$2,023,538	57%
◆ Donations (Individual \$\$)	\$182,957	\$140,394	\$322,421	9%
◆ Other Revenue	\$225,969	\$40,337	\$565,894	16%
TOTAL REVENUE	\$2,517,602	\$2,639,874	\$3,542,761	100%
EXPENSES	FY2021	FY2022	FY2023	%
◆ Program expenses	\$1,453,554	\$1,748,306	\$2,087,628	85%
◆ Management & General	\$170,585	\$144,601	\$161,795	7%
◆ Fundraising	\$105,555	\$247,017	\$204,868	8%
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$1,729,694	\$2,139,924	\$2,454,291	100%
CHANGE IN NET ASSETS	\$787,908	\$499,950	\$1,088,470	
NET ASSETS (beginning of yr)	\$2,595,386	\$3,383,294	\$3,883,244	
NET ASSETS (end of yr.)	\$3,383,294	\$3,883,244	\$4,971,714	

Farm Rescue's Luke Benedict, Sr. Operations Manager, and Ben Smith, Field Operations Manager, ensure every farm case is a success.



Luke Benedict, Sr. Operations Manager Ben Smith, Field Operations Manager

Meet Two of Us...

Luke Benedict, Sr. Operations Manager, and Ben Smith, Field Operations Manager, procure and maintain all of Farm Rescue's equipment and vehicles. They also oversee each farm case from meeting with the family to arranging specialized volunteers perfect for the job and coordinating equipment transportation. Like everyone at Farm Rescue, they take their jobs seriously because nothing less than families' utmost satisfaction will do.

"It's an honor and a privilege to work on these farm operations. It's about the most sacred thing: Them trusting you with their livelihood! That takes a lot of faith," says Luke.

"By the time we leave, the families understand the impact. It's very gratifying to see this. Because every family we get signed up will potentially remember this the rest of their lives, I take that to heart," adds Ben.

Farm Rescue's Board of Directors



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Genita Limke
Volunteer Coordinator



Stephanie Green
Outreach Coordinator



JOHN DEERE

SEEDING GROUP

PROUD FARM RESCUE PARTNERS

**Corporate sponsors,
local organizations,
and individual donors
– ALL of you make
our mission possible!**



**SEE THEIR
STORIES**



**“We are honored to serve our communities
and assist those in need through our
continued partnership with Farm Rescue.
We’re excited to see what the future brings.”**

- Dale Patrick, Factory Materials Manager
John Deere Seeding Group



**Join us as a donor, sponsor, or volunteer
to help us give someone a hand up.
It's the right thing to do for our neighbors.**

Labor of Love

HUMILITY

“Very much enjoyed working with everyone. The two volunteers almost acted like I was doing them a favor!” – Mike Schutte

TIME

“You give time out of your lives to help us. There’s no better love than that.”
– Nick Hettwer, Jr.

HOPE

“You all brought hope and happiness back to our lives when we didn’t know which direction to turn.” – Christopher Berg

“Without Farm Rescue, I would have been lucky to get through my disaster at all! I’m fairly certain I would have just given up. Thank you with all my heart!” – Doug Knoblett

INSPIRATION

The Cass Clayton Band performed a Farm Rescue benefit concert in May 2023, raising a record \$130,000! [See the story.](#)



SEE THE STORY

Millennial Farmer came back for more!

Thank you Luke & Stephanie for organizing your crew to help us get the wheat crop seeded.
A great pleasure meeting Mike, Steve, Mark, Chester, Mark, Albert & Greg.
A huge Thank you to ALL the sponsors and their generous contributions to this Farm Rescue organization. Dean & Paulette Boer

Words cannot express the thanks our family has towards the help we received during our time in need. We are thankful for everyone who chipped in to help this year, especially Farm Rescue! Please keep up the good work and I hope to be in a position to pay it forward someday.

Jeffrey Hines

Thank you so much for coming and planting our corn for us this year. We really cannot express how much it helped to have that off our plate! It was a big help to us to not have to stress or worry how it would get done. You were a real blessing to us during a very difficult time!

Karin, Mary, Cash, Kate, Hope & Anne Schiley

Farm Rescue team,
THANK YOU all so much for coming to our rescue! We are beyond grateful and appreciative for this program and the wonderful volunteers that make it all work!
You all brought hope and happiness back to our lives when we didn't know which direction to turn.
We will forever be thankful for all of you!!

Christopher & Kay Berg & kids

Dear Farm Rescue and members,
Thank you so much for helping us during this time of need. Never thought this could happen to us. So grateful that Farm Rescue is there for us and others in unforseen circumstances. May God bless each & everyone of you. Again so thankful for your help!

Rana and Joni Brandenburg

Farm Rescue™



It's an honor and privilege to help farm families, including yours.

SEE THE STORIES • APPLY • JOIN US • DONATE



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