

50-Cent Fixes

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Whether farming is your livelihood or you're a weekend gardener, the simple fixes listed below can help reduce the stress and wear your body endures while farming to make your work more productive and efficient.



Standing at a work bench for an extended period fixing that broken mower engine?

Find a scrap piece of 4"x4" and use it as a footrest to periodically shift your weight from side-to-side to relieve pressure in your back and knees.



Do you experience back or knee discomfort from bending over/down when planting seeds ?

Use a scrap piece of PVC pipe at a length long enough to hold while in an upright, standing position. Straddle your garden rows, push the pipe in to the desired planting depth and simply drop the seed down the pipe.



Weeding young plants in plastic flats?

Don't bend over to weed the plants; put the flats on a portable table that you can bring to your worksite. This will bring the flats to a height that is comfortable for you to work from.



Washing leafy greens by hand?

Instead of putting stress on your back by bending over and exposing your hands to cold water as you wash, put the greens in a mesh bag and with an erect posture lift the greens out of the water. This will allow you to efficiently wash more greens, reduce the time your hands are exposed to cold water, limit back strain, and reduce the risk of the greens being damaged during the washing process.



Having difficulty gripping a pair of pliers or other small hand tools?

Try a product called Sugru or Model Magic which is a light-weight moldable substance. When applied and cured it can be used to "build up" the handles of small hand tools to provide extra gripping area or comfort. The material can also be used to make a pencil or utensil grips.



One-handed use of a battery/ electric operated drill?

Use a magnetic drill bit which will make one-handed drill operation easier and more efficient.



Need reminders about chore times and other tasks around the farm?

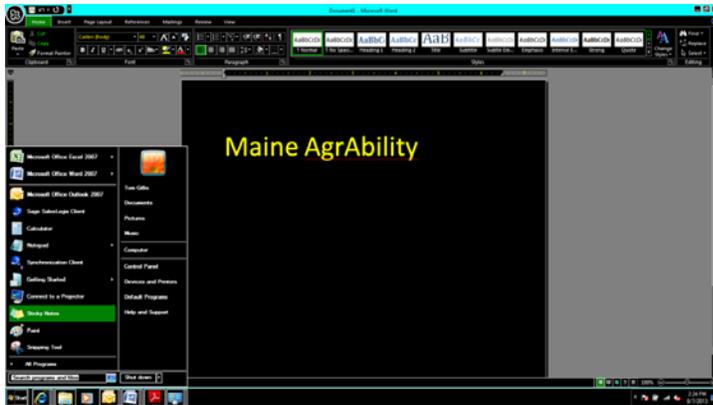
Program a list of chores into your cell phone, smart phone or iPad which can give you an auditory prompt (i.e. beep, ring, chime) as to when necessary tasks need to occur.



Do you have low vision or a vision impairment and are trying to manage farm records on your computer?

Adjust the computer screen's display to a high contrast theme; enlarge the size of the mouse arrow; or use the on-screen magnifier feature. All these functions come standard on all Windows PCs and can be found under the 'Ease of Access Center' section:

→ Start Menu; Control Panel; Ease of Access Center; Choose the desired adaptation and its settings.



High-contrast computer screen display in a "Word" document



On-Screen Magnifier controlled with mouse

For more information about ideas that can make your farming experience more productive and less physically demanding, check out the National AgrAbility Program's Tool Box Assistive Technology Database at <http://www.agrability.org/Toolbox/index.cfm>.