

Are you or someone you know showing signs of stress or mental fatigue? Here are some tips and resources that focus on your well-being and that of others around you.

Agriculture comes with manual labor, long hours, uncertainty and high stress. Understanding the warning signs of stress, how to start conversations, and being aware of mental health resources are important steps toward health and well-being.

Warning Signs of Stress

Physical

Headaches
Ulcers
Frequent Sickness
Backaches
Sleep Disturbances

Emotional

Sadness
Anger
Anxiety
Bitterness
Loss of Humor

Behavioral

Irritability
Withdrawal
Alcoholism
Acting Out
Backbiting

Cognitive

Memory Loss
Lack of Concentration
Inability to Make Decisions
Decreased Self-Esteem

How Farmers May Handle Stress

Everyone deals with stress in different ways. Some common coping behaviors may include:

- Ignoring the problem and walking away
- Turning to alcohol, drugs and food
- Isolation and wanting to be alone

How To Start Conversations

It can be difficult to start conversations on the topic of stress. Here are some tips to get you started:

- Acknowledge their feelings. "What you're going through must be difficult, how are you managing?"
- Show interest. "You mentioned that meeting was really stressful, can you tell me more about it?"
- Don't be afraid to ask. "You seem to be thinking about a lot, is there anything I can do to help you?"
- Stay present and connected. "You mentioned maybe seeking help, I can help connect you to a resource."



Mental Health in Agriculture

20%

Rural residents make up 20% of the population

48%

Rural adults experiencing mental health challenges

40%

Experience relationship problems



*Man, like the bridge, was designed to carry the load of the moment,
not the combined weight of a year at once.*
-William A. Ward

Mental Health Treatment in the Farming Community

There are multiple ways to seek mental health assistance.

- Counselors
- Religious sector
- Primary care providers
- Mental health providers
- Community service boards
- Inpatient care



Characteristics Common to Well-Being

Individuals actively involved or who possess certain characteristics tend to experience better well-being.

- Cultural and religious beliefs
- Family and community support
- Mental health care
- Problem solving skills

Self Care Tips for Well-Being

Take time to add health promoting steps into your life.

- Eat well
- Get adequate sleep
- Avoid alcohol and drugs
- Try relaxation techniques
- Do something you enjoy every day
- Spend time with friends and family

Mental Health Resources

Farmer Stress National Hotline

- Talk: 1-844-293-8255
- Text: 38255

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline

- Talk: 1-800-273-8255
- Text: 741741

Farm Credit of the Virginias Member Assistance Program

- Confidential and free to members and their families.
- <https://www.farmcreditofvirginias.com/about/member-benefits/member-assistance-program/>

Farm Credit Rural Resilience

- Learn sources of stress and how to manage
- <https://farmcredit.com/rural-resilience>

Farm Aid Hotline

- Talk: 800-FARM-AID (327-6243)

Farm Crisis Center

- Resource hub, local resource directory
- <https://farmcrisis.nfu.org/>



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