

**Questions and Answers from the April 1, 2020 Webinar**  
**Farm and Farm Family Risk and Resiliency: Tools You can Use with Farmers, Professionals & Communities to Create Thriving Farms**

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**Q1: How do you establish a sense of need [among] young farmers who feel indestructible?**

*This question is worthy of an entire webinar. One article on beginning farmers suggested that our tendency to look at the problem as one of knowledge and skills deficiency overlooks the influence of the greater environment. In the case of farmers, not only is there the phenomena of attitudes of young adults but of the culture of farming with its focus on independence.*

*Answers will likely be found in research from multiple disciplines—especially psychology and sociology and the discipline of adult education. Studies of millennials will provide some answers. And experiential knowledge from multiple professionals working with young farmers will also provide insight.*

**Note:** Those of you working with young farmers might consider the feasibility of a hosting a webinar to explore the question and find workable solutions.

**Q2: [Are] there special issues for farm families with youth [who] may be pressured to stay on the farm and stress from educational concerns and profitability in their future (stemming farm youth fleeing the farm)?**

*The issues may be similar to any family-owned business and have to do with succession planning, values, intergenerational dynamics, perceived opportunities, the presence of legacy living and heritage, etc. For many farming families, their deeply felt connections to the land, and to what, for many is a “calling,” can become a stressor if there are different connections to the land among family members of multiple generations.*

*During the webinar you were introduced to the Sustainable Family Business Theory as a tested theory that explains the role of family in entrepreneurial businesses. It is further explained in the “Farm and Farm Family Risk and Resilience Framework: A Guide for Extension Educational Programming.”\*\* The guide explores multi-generational challenges both from the theories presented and the literature on sources of stress within farm families. The guide includes some tools to use with succession planning even as children become young adults.*

**Note:** Be sure to study the theories of resilience in the Guide. They put the issues into a context for prevention and intervention. They should help you in planning educational programming.

**References:**

\*Calo, A. (2018). How knowledge deficit interventions fail to resolve beginning farmer challenges. *Agriculture and Human Values*. 35, 367-381.

\*\*Braun, B. & Pippidis, M. (2020) *Farm and Farm Family Risk and Resilience Framework: A Guide for Extension Educational Programming*. Available at: <https://www.udel.edu/content/dam/udelImages/canr/pdfs/extension/economic-personal-development/Farm-and-Farm-Family-Risk-and-Resilience-Guide-1-17-20.pdf> .

**Q3: I strongly believe they [farmers and farm families] can and will overcome crisis like we are dealing now much better than many groups. What do you think?**

*The nature of farming is risk taking. The farming population has historically taken, and dealt with, many risks. Many farmers have dealt with viruses that affected and sometimes ended their flocks and/or herds. Many, even during the farm crises of the past 7 years, have found ways to turn threats into opportunities. They are exhibiting characteristics of resilience.*

*The COVID-19 crisis is one shared by all farming operations and farm families as well as the general population. It can be a time of establishing or re-establishing the importance of a strong and healthy farming population and farming business to the food security of all. Viewed from the risk and resilience socioecological framework, the long term viability will not only depend on what the farm and ranching population does but on the policies that impact them over the long-term. Agricultural and health polices both need updating as we come out of the current public health crisis.*

**Note:** I personally think some farming businesses and families will be able to pivot they ways of operating and even find new and long-term customers. In my way of thinking, those who do, and who sustain their families and farms in the long run, will exhibit characteristics of resilience thinking and of holistic farm and family living and working.

**Q4: Do you know of any healthcare systems that are working to do health survey of their [farming] community that I could learn from?**

*I will provide an answer from two perspectives: Prior to and during the COVID-19 crisis.*

*Prior: As a result of the ACA, hospitals are required to do community health assessments. You could access the most recent in your area to learn about needs. However, with many rural hospital closings, there may be a lack of available assessments. There is a community needs toolkit available. The 9 steps are shown in an infographic at: <https://www.aha.org/system/files/hpoe/Reports-HPOE/2017/cha-toolkit-infographic.pdf>. If an assessment is warranted at this time, the 9 steps could be expedited to provide needed information to guide actions.*

*During: Information is limited on what, if any assessments, are being done about population health needs during this crisis. Most appear to be focused on supplies and space needed by caregivers. The CDC provided this guidance titled “Interim Guidance: Public Health Communicators Get Your Community Ready for Coronavirus Disease 2019” available at: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/php/public-health-communicators-get-your-community-ready.html>.*

Another source is the new County Health Rankings released April 7, 2020 available at: <https://www.countyhealthrankings.org/>. Tools to respond are also available at the website.

**Notes:** A review of the literature in the Farm and Farm Family Risk and Resilience Framework Guide will reveal farm-related needs linked to stressors and crises. The research findings suggest interventions.