



Farmer & Rancher Stress Assistance Network-NE Resources for Managing Stress and Burnout Massachusetts



Stress is part of life, and farming is considered to be one of the most high-risk and stressful occupations. In fact, studies by The National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) confirm that agriculture is one of the most hazardous industries in the United States and that farmers represent an occupational group with one of the highest levels of job-related stress. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC, Sep 30, 2022), farmers and ranchers are nearly two times more likely to die by suicide in the U.S. compared to other occupations.



Everyone develops their own tactics to manage all of the routine pressures in order to cope, but burnout can develop over time when someone faces chronic stressors. And some extraordinary stressors may come your way that cannot be effectively managed with the same strategies, resulting in feeling overwhelmed.

When feeling swamped, burned-out or overloaded, keeping your frustrations bottled up and isolating yourself is **not** an effective strategy. In fact, that approach can deepen the anxiety and enhance feelings of despair, resulting in continued distress, depression or feeling compelled to rages or abusive behaviors toward yourself or others.

Reaching out for support or assistance is NOT a sign of weakness; rather, it demonstrates one's strength and responsibility. Family members and close associates may have noticed some changes and would be caring confidants. If there is a preference for talking with someone outside the family, it might make sense to talk with a trusted friend or reaching out to your primary care physician or a pastor or other individual in your own religious group. There are now resources available for farmers to assist with managing farm stress and connect farmers with needed contacts and supports. The worst thing is not talking to anyone.

National crisis lines, hotlines and resources

988

988 has been designated as the new three-digit dialing code that will route callers to the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline. Starting July 16, 2022, this became available to everyone across the United States.

1.800.950.NAMI (6264)

The NAMI (National Alliance on Mental Health) Helpline can be reached Monday through Friday, 10 a.m. – 10 p.m. ET. Call 1-800-950-NAMI (6264); text "Helpline" to 62640; email at helpline@nami.org; chat: nami.org/help

Text to 741741

The Crisis Text Line is a texting service for emotional crisis support. It is free, available 24/7, and confidential. Start your message with HOME or START or HELLO to get connected to a volunteer Crisis Counselor.

1.800.FARM-AID (1.800.327.6243)

Farm Aid has resources and a hotline for farmer support. (This is NOT a crisis line.) To talk to the Hotline Team directly, call **1-800-FARM-AID (1-800-327-6243)**. The Hotline is answered Monday through Friday from 9am – 10pm ET. Hotline assistance available in English and Spanish.

AgriStress HelplineSM (Call or text 833-897-2474) This is a free and confidential crisis and support line that you can call or text 24/7. Interpretation services are provided in 160 languages. The helpline is answered by trained professionals who can offer support and/or help you find mental health resources in your area. They are trained in understanding issues related to agriculture.



Some states in the Northeastern region have their own stress management and crisis resources specifically for farmers, their family members and farm workers. These may be available through the state's Cooperative Extension Service, Department or Agency of Agriculture or other agricultural program. In Massachusetts, you can contact MassGrow

Wellness to learn more about programs available to you that can provide assistance, supports and referrals for farmers.

The Massachusetts Department of Agriculture Resources (MDAR) MassGrown Wellness program was developed to assist farmers experiencing anxiety, depression, isolation and other mental health challenges impacting their farming lives.

MassGrown Wellness

A Healthy Farm Isn't Possible Without a Healthy You!

Website: <https://www.mass.gov/orgs/massgrown-wellness>

For Emergency Assistance Call or text 833-773-2445.

Acknowledgements Material developed by Jake Jacobs, FRSAN-Northeast/Cultivemos Extension Cohort Coordinator, University of Delaware Cooperative Extension.

This work was funded through Cultivemos/Northeast Farm and Ranch Stress Assistance Network grant coordinated by the National Young Farmers Coalition. This work is supported by the Farm and Ranch Stress Assistance Network (FRSAN) project, grant number 2020-70028-32729 from the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA). Any opinions, findings, conclusions, or recommendations expressed in this publication are those of the author(s) and should not be construed to represent any official USDA or U.S. Government determination or policy.



This work is licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivatives 4.0 International License. To view a copy of this license, visit <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/>. You must provide attribution if you use these materials, and you may use them for educational purposes only. You may not sell or amend these materials without express permission of the authors.

Cooperative Extension is an equal opportunity employer and service provider.