COPING WITH FARM & RURAL STRESS IN MINNESOTA
Minnesota Department of Agriculture

Farming can be a stressful occupation. Often, you live where you work. Your co-workers may be your spouse or other family members. While you get to be your own boss, you feel responsible for a lot and can control very little.

Financial problems, price and marketing uncertainties, farm transfer issues, production challenges, marital difficulties, and social pressures can be real sources of stress for farmers and farm family members. Inside this brochure, you’ll find some of the people and organizations who are ready to help.

HELP FOR STRESS, ANXIETY, DEPRESSION, ANGER, OR FEELING “STUCK”

Farm & Rural Helpline
833-600-2670 (press 1)
mnnesota farm stress.com

Free, confidential, 24/7. If you or someone you know is struggling with stress, anxiety, depression, or suicidal thoughts – call. Sometimes it’s easier to talk to somebody you don’t know. Translators available.

Ted Matthews & Monica McConkey
Rural Mental Health Counselors
320-266-2390 (Ted) or 218-280-7785 (Monica) Ted and Monica work with farmers throughout Minnesota. No cost; no paperwork. This service is funded by the Minnesota Legislature.

Crisis Text Line
Text MN to 741 741

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline
800-273-8255 (Veterans, press 1)

Mobile Crisis Teams
From a cell phone, dial **CRISIS (**274-747)
mn.gov/dhs/crisis
Available in every county, counselors can arrive quickly and provide in-person, short-term counseling or mental health services during a crisis or emergency.

University of Minnesota Extension
800-232-9077
extension.umn.edu/rural-stress
Offers financial and mental health programs, news, and resources, including online stress workshops.

BUSINESS, FINANCIAL, AND LEGAL HELP

Farmer-Lender Mediation
218-935-5785
z.umn.edu/mediation
For farmers in debt who need help negotiating with a lender or creditor. In Minnesota, farmers have a legal right to mediation for secured debt over $15,000.

Minnesota Rural Finance Authority
651-201-6556
www.mda.state.mn.us/agfinance
Partners with local lenders to offer a wide variety of low-interest loans for farmers.

Minnesota State Farm Business Management Education
218-894-5163 or 507-389-7263
agcentric.org/farm-business-management
Teaches farmers how to use their own farm records to make business decisions and helps them develop management skills.

Farmers Legal Action Group (FLAG)
877-860-4349
flaginc.org
Legal services, referrals, and support for family farmers.

U of M Extension Financial Counseling for Farmers
800-232-9077
z.umn.edu/financehelp
Financial analysts meet with farmers to help them make sense of their financial situation and explore options to keep their farms functioning. Free and confidential.

Minnesota Farm Advocates
833-600-2670 (press 0)
www.mda.state.mn.us/farmadvocates
Free, personal help for farmers having financial problems or who have been through a natural disaster. Farm Advocates have experience with agricultural lending and lender negotiation, mediation, farm programs, crisis counseling, and disaster relief. They can also help you find financial, legal, or social services.

COVID-19 INFECTION PREVENTION FOR AGRICULTURAL EMPLOYERS AND EMPLOYEES
Upper Midwest Agricultural Safety and Health Center

Establish procedures to routinely clean and disinfect commonly touched surfaces and objects (e.g., water containers, steering wheels, shared tools, shared work stations, door handles, seat belts, insides of toilet facilities) throughout the workday. These procedures should include:

- Using products that are EPA-approved for use against the virus that causes COVID-19.
- Ensuring there are adequate supplies to support cleaning and disinfection practices.
- Following the manufacturer’s instructions for all cleaning and disinfection products (e.g., safety requirements, protective equipment, concentration, contact time).
THE IMPORTANCE OF FREQUENT HAND-WASHING WITH SOAP AND WATER

- Following CDC guidelines to wash for at least 20 seconds.
- When employees arrive at work and before they leave work.
- Before and after eating or using the toilet.
- After close interaction with other persons.
- After contacting shared surfaces or tools.
- Before and after wearing masks or gloves.
- After blowing your nose or sneezing.

PROCEDURES TO INCREASE SOCIAL DISTANCING ON FARMS

Social distancing is an infection control measure that can stop or slow down the spread of an infectious disease by limiting contact between people. Safe social distancing means maintaining a distance of at least six feet from other people. Agricultural employers should use the following social distancing measures to stop or slow down the spread of COVID-19:

- Social distancing should be practiced, whether outdoors, in vehicles, or in structures.
- Stagger break and lunch times.
- Limit crew size by staggering work shifts or increasing the number of work shifts.
- Establish procedures around pick-up and drop-off times or locations to minimize the movement of vehicles on and off the farm and the number of interactions between individuals.
- Establish work practices and work stations, and adjust line speed and other processes to enable employees to maintain safe social distancing while working.

- Provide additional seating and shade structures to allow employees to take breaks while staying at least six feet apart.
- Encourage employees to avoid large gatherings and practice social distancing during non-work hours.
- Employers who house workers are encouraged to be proactive in making social distancing possible for those exhibiting and not exhibiting symptoms.

PROCEDURES TO HELP PREVENT THE SPREAD OF COVID-19 AT THE WORKSITE

Agricultural employers should establish and implement the following procedures to help prevent the spread of COVID-19:

- Recommend workers to wear face cloth coverings to reduce the spread of COVID-19 among workers.
- Immediately send employees with acute respiratory illness symptoms home or to medical care as needed.
- Advise sick or COVID-19 positive workers to limit contact with animals. Establish protocols to help cover animal handling and care shifts.
- Establish procedures to notify local health officials of COVID-19 infections.
- Encourage sick workers, who might otherwise work out of economic necessity, to stay home by not punishing them for missing work.
- If symptoms, illness, or caring for an ill family member prevents them from working.

SYMPTOMS OF CORONAVIRUS

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

People with COVID-19 have had a wide range of symptoms reported — ranging from mild symptoms to severe illness. Symptoms may appear 2-14 days after exposure to the virus. People with these symptoms or combinations of symptoms may have COVID-19:

- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing

Or at least two of these symptoms:

- Fever
- Chills
- Repeated shaking with chills
- Muscle pain
- Headache
- Sore throat
- New loss of taste or smell

Children have similar symptoms to adults and generally have mild illness. This list is not all inclusive. Please consult your medical provider for any other symptoms that are severe or concerning to you.

WHEN TO SEEK MEDICAL ATTENTION

If you have any of these emergency warning signs* for COVID-19 get medical attention immediately:

- Trouble breathing
- Persistent pain or pressure in the chest
- New confusion or inability to arouse
- Bluish lips or face

*This list is not all inclusive. Please consult your medical provider for any other symptoms that are severe or concerning to you.

Call 911 if you have a medical emergency: Notify the operator that you have, or think you might have, COVID-19. If possible, put on a cloth face covering before medical help arrives.

Learn more at: MNOSHA COMPLIANCE: NOVEL CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19)

- Make handwashing stations more readily available and encourage their use.

Horizon Public Health: 320-763-6018