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EXTENSION

RESOURCES FOR FARMERS UNDER STRESS

And People Who Care
About Them



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This resource booklet was developed by University of Georgia Cooperative Extension, with input from many farmers, their spouses, and Extension agents and specialists. Much of the information here is from research-based sources on stress and well-being, such as the American Psychological Association, the World Health Organization, and Michigan State University, to name just a few. If you would like to read the complete text from which we took the information, links to their original materials are provided at the bottom of each page.

Special thanks go to Ian Marbuger, who compiled and organized this document, and to Diane Bales, Maria Bowie, Virginia Brown, Jennifer Dunn, Andrea Garcia, Stephanie Hollifield, Laura Perry Johnson, Andrea Scarrow, Anna Scheyett, and Emily Watson for their valuable input. We'd also like to acknowledge Jennifer Waldeck and the Department of Agricultural Leadership, Education and Communication for their support.

Most especially, thanks to the farmers and their spouses of Georgia, whose input made this resource possible, and whose work feeds and clothes Georgia and the world.

May 2024.



WHY ARE WE CONCERNED ABOUT FARMER STRESS?

“Last year, our commodity prices were very good. But with the input cost from last year, the math just didn’t add up. So that still hurt a lot. This year, commodity prices have went down significantly. Input prices have went down a little bit, but not enough to offset those commodity prices decreasing ... money is obviously the number one thing that stresses growers out. The weather, too. Weather is huge.”

-South Georgia Farmer

“Never being able to really let go. Even if you were to remove yourself and go on a two-day vacation, you can’t ever stop worrying about what’s happening at the farm. Whether it’s the cows getting out when you’re out of town or a hurricane coming through and ruining your irrigation or—it’s just you can never just relax.”

-Farmer Spouse



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WHAT IS STRESS AND WHY SHOULD WE WORRY ABOUT IT?

What is stress?

- Stress is a state where you experience a difficult situation or challenge, and see it as more than you can manage with your current resources. Stress is natural and is a protective device our brain has to warn us to pay attention to danger, challenges, and threats in our lives. *Everyone* experiences stress to some degree.
- Not all stress is bad. Sometimes, stress can be a positive force, motivating you to do well at school or a job interview. But often—like when a piece of equipment breaks down—it’s a negative force. If you experience stress over a prolonged period of time, it becomes chronic—but the good news is there are things you can do to manage your stress.
- When stress starts interfering with your normal life for more than a few weeks, it can become harmful. The longer the stress lasts, the more physiological changes happen that can wear away at your body and your mind. You can feel tired, have a harder time making good decisions, experience “brain fog,” or even experience depression or anxiety.

World Health Organization. (2023). What is stress?
<https://www.who.int/news-room/questions-and-answers/item/stress>

American Psychological Association. (2022). How stress affects your health.
<https://www.apa.org/topics/stress/health>



WHY SHOULD WE WORRY ABOUT STRESS?

The World Health Organization outlines lots of ways stress symptoms can affect your body, your thoughts and feelings, and your behavior:

- Stress over long periods of time lowers problem-solving abilities and makes it hard to focus. And on a farm, this can lead to injury.
- The long-term activation of the stress response system and the stress hormones that come with it can hurt almost all of your body's processes. This can put you at increased risk for a number of physical and mental health problems, including anxiety, depression, digestive issues, headaches, muscle tension and pain, heart disease, heart attack, high blood pressure, stroke, sleep problems, weight gain, and memory and concentration impairment.
- Chronic stress may also cause disease because of your response to stress, like overeating, smoking, and other unhealthy habits people use to cope with stress.
- Chronic stress also suppresses the body's immune system, making it harder to recover from illnesses and easier to get sick.

American Psychological Association. (2022). How stress affects your health.
<https://www.apa.org/topics/stress/health>

Gucker, D., & Steele, E. (2020). Farm life is uncontrollable, know the warning signs of stress.
<https://extension.illinois.edu/blogs/know-how-know-more/2020-01-17-farm-life-uncontrollable-know-warning-signs-stress>

Mayo Clinic Staff. (2023). Stress symptoms: Effects on your body and behavior.
<https://www.mayoclinic.org/healthy-lifestyle/stress-management/in-depth/stress-symptoms/art-20050987>

World Health Organization. (2023). How does stress affect us?
<https://www.who.int/news-room/questions-and-answers/item/stress>

SIGNS OF HIGH STRESS IN FARMERS

“They’re always going to have stress, but you’re going to be the ones that notice something’s different now than it was. He’s more grumpy than—or grumpier longer, or do you know what I’m saying? Or he’s just in this place that he can’t get out of.”

-Farmer Spouse

“But now looking back since he told me a few things, now I can look back—and now I know why he quit farming. I thought he quit farming because he just was going to do something else. He quit farming because of stress.”

-Extension Specialist



WHAT ARE SIGNS OF HIGH STRESS IN FARMERS AND FARM FAMILIES?

Signs of farm stress

There are several signs or symptoms when a farmer or farm family may need help that can be seen by friends, family members, neighbors, veterinarians, clergy persons, school personnel, or health workers. Colorado State University Extension provides a list of signs, which include:

- **Change in routines.** The farmer or farm family stops attending religious services, drops out of school clubs/athletic teams, social organizations or other groups, or no longer stops in at the local coffee shop or feed mill.
- **Change in mood.** The farmer may have a shorter temper, or seem to have lost their energy and not care anymore, or be more anxious, or lose their sense of humor.
- **Increase in illness.** Farmers or farm family members may experience more upper respiratory illnesses (colds, flu) or other chronic conditions (aches, pains, persistent cough).
- **Increase in farm accidents.** The risk of farm accidents increases because of fatigue or loss of ability to concentrate; children may be at risk if there isn't adequate childcare.
- **Increase drinking or use of other substances.** Farmers or farm family members may increase their use of substances to try to self-medicate their stress.
- **Appearance of farmstead declines.** The farmer or farm family no longer takes pride in the way farm buildings and grounds appear, or no longer has the time or energy to do maintenance work.
- **Care of livestock declines.** Animals may not be cared for in the usual way; they may lose condition, appear gaunt, or show signs of neglect or physical abuse.
- **Children show signs of stress.** Farm children may act out, decline in academic performance, or be increasingly absent from school; they may also show signs of physical abuse or neglect.

Fetsch, R., & Williams, R. T. (n.d.). Farm and ranch family stress and depression: A checklist and guide for making referrals. <https://extension.colostate.edu/disaster-web-sites/farm-and-ranch-family-stress-and-depression-a-checklist-and-guide-for-making-referrals/>

WAYS TO MANAGE STRESS

“I mean, they take better care of their cattle’s health than they do their own personal health. I mean, they take better care of the soil than they do their own health. We just need to—if there’s a way to get them to prioritize their health, that’s what we need to do.”

-Extension Agent

“Going for a run might be beneficial (for stress management) to one person while a revised business plan might be effective for another. From my perspective, a great start would be to identify at least one person you would feel comfortable talking to regarding the topic, professional or not. Beyond that, begin cataloging some of your sources of stress and, from there, you can develop a plan for addressing those items.”

-Southwest Georgia Farmer



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WHAT ARE SOME SKILLS TO MANAGE STRESS?

Eat healthy foods

Here are some ideas for eating healthy on the job:

- Drink water or unsweetened beverages like flavored seltzers instead of soda, energy drinks, and sport drinks.
- Have snacks ready for early mornings and times when you can't stop for a meal, such as healthy trail mix, low-sugar granola bars, unsalted nuts, or low-fat yogurt.
- Make 50% of your plate fruits or vegetables at every meal.
- Be careful of salt intake, as diets high in sodium are linked to heart disease, stroke, and high blood pressure.

Exercise

Farmers work all day, so why tell them to exercise? Even if they are always working, they may not be stretching and making their back and core stronger, which prevents injury.

Exercise strategies for a busy schedule

The Vermont Department of Health suggests:

- When working on tasks that don't require machinery, try walking instead of riding on a tractor or mower.
- Map out a trail on your farm that takes 15 minutes to walk briskly. Try to walk that trail once or twice a day.
- When you get out of your vehicle, stretch next to it for 2 minutes.
- Make exercise enjoyable—walk the dog at a fast pace, play kickball with your children, anything that makes you smile and move.

Cleveland Clinic. (2020). How exercise affects your sleep.
<https://health.clevelandclinic.org/how-exercise-affects-your-sleep>

University of Georgia Extension. (n.d.). Eat healthy, be active
<https://extension.uga.edu/programs-services/detail.html/73/efnep.html>

Vermont Department of Health. (2009). Tips for farmers: Staying healthy on the farm.
https://www.healthvermont.gov/sites/default/files/documents/pdf/HPDP_WW_Tips%20for%20Farmers.pdf

WHAT ARE SOME SKILLS TO MANAGE STRESS?

Get enough sleep

A lack of quality sleep can take a toll on your physical and mental health. Here are some things you can try to help you get a good night's rest.

- **Reduce noise.** The quieter your room, the better your sleep will be. For some, using a white noise machine can help filter out any annoying background noise. There are many free apps for your phone available that provide this white noise—or even try an electric fan.
- **Increase darkness.** We need a dark environment for good sleep. Any amount of artificial light can interfere with sleep. Blackout curtains can help, as can using a sleep mask (available in most drugstores).
- **Reduce exposure to screens.** The screens on our phones and laptop disrupt the brain's ability to make sleep-related hormones because of the artificial blue light that's emitted. It's recommended that you turn off screens at least 3 hours before bedtime. If that isn't possible, many devices now have nighttime settings that filter out the harmful light.
- **Decrease caffeine.** Americans consume more caffeine than ever, which may contribute to insufficient sleep. Caffeine can stay in your blood for up to 8 hours. Therefore, drinking large amounts after 3–4 p.m. is not recommended, especially if you are sensitive to caffeine or have trouble sleeping.
- **Be consistent.** Keeping regular sleep and wake times can help with sleep, as your body's rhythm functions on a loop that you establish. Trying to “catch up” by sleeping more on weekends can have a long-term negative effect.

American Psychological Association. (2013). Stress and sleep.
<https://www.apa.org/news/press/releases/stress/2013/sleep>

OTHER SKILLS TO HELP MANAGE STRESS

Breathe

Breathing practices can benefit anyone, especially those who want to reduce stress. These practices have been used by everyone from athletes to U.S. Navy SEALs, police officers, and nurses. There are lots of different breathing techniques; here is a simple one from Healthline:

Diaphragmatic breathing

It may be easiest to practice while lying flat on a bed or the floor when you first start.

1. Sit or lie down on a comfortable, flat surface.
2. Relax your shoulders, shifting them downward away from your ears.
3. Put a hand on your chest and a hand on your stomach.
4. Without straining or pushing, breathe in through your nose until you can't take in any more air.
5. Feel the air moving through your nostrils into your stomach, expanding your stomach and sides of the waist. Your chest remains relatively still.
6. Purse your lips as if sipping through a straw. Exhale slowly through your lips for 4 seconds and feel your stomach gently contracting.
7. Repeat these steps several times for best results.
8. You can find more breathing techniques at this link: <https://www.healthline.com/health/breathwork#exercises>

Take care of your family. Take care of your farm. Take care of yourself.

We all know that stress is a part of farming, but high stress can make it difficult to stay focused on what matters — your family, your farm, and your community.

Don't let stress wear you down.

Stay **SAFER** with these simple steps:

- S**leep: Get a good night's sleep each night.
- A**ware: Be aware when you are getting stressed. Take a break, breathe and stretch, even if it is just for a few minutes.
- F**ocus: Focus on things you are grateful for, such as family, friends, faith.
- E**at well: Eat healthy food and drink plenty of water.
- R**each Out: Talk with someone, like a friend, pastor, or counselor.

AN EASY WAY TO
REMEMBER HOW TO
MANAGE STRESS:
STAY S.A.F.E.R.

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If you or someone you know is struggling or in crisis,
help is available at the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline:
Call or text 988 or chat "988lifeline.org"



Visit our website for more resources and information: extension.uga.edu/rural

HELPING A FARMER UNDER STRESS

“If I ran it [farmer stress programming] ... I’d say ‘Here’s the things we can’t do. We realize that. We can’t stop the weather. We can’t change the price of corn or cotton. We can’t do that. But here’s what we can do. And we can do this (stress management supports) for you’ or something like that. We’re not trying to tell you we could solve all your problems. We can’t. But we can help you cope with your problems.”

-Extension Specialist



HOW TO TALK WITH FARMERS UNDER STRESS

If you think a farmer is going through a hard time and showing signs of stress, you can help by doing some of these things, as suggested by Michigan State University Extension:

- **Active Listening:** Just being there and listening can be hugely helpful to someone. Active listening is even more helpful. Encourage the person to reveal more about how they are feeling and what they are thinking. Don't push, but be caring and interested.
- **Empathy, not Sympathy:** Sometimes we are tempted to give advice, or to say "I know just how you feel," or give pity for the awful situation the person is in. Instead, acknowledge the person's reality and look for solutions together. "This is a really tough situation. Maybe we could talk and try to figure some things out together. We could even talk with (then name someone who has been through something similar or is experienced in the situation) and they could have some ideas."
- **Resources:** Bring in experts who can help—Cooperative Extension, FSA, Farm Bureau, a commodity commission member—make it clear to the farmer that they don't have to go through this alone, and there are people who care and want to help.

Michigan State University Extension. (n.d.). How to talk with farmers under stress.
https://www.canr.msu.edu/managing_farm_stress/how-to-talk-with-farmers-under-stress.pdf

THINGS THAT MIGHT BE HELPFUL TO SAY

Here are a few things that may be helpful to say when talking with a farmer under stress:

- I hear you saying _____ (just repeat back the main concern the farmer is expressing, so they know you understand)
- That sounds like a lot to handle. What are you doing to take care of yourself?
- This situation sounds rough. What can I do to help?
- Would it be helpful if we worked together on a plan for how to manage the situation you're worried about?
- Are there other people who have been helpful or supportive to you when things have been tough in the past? Are any of them around and able to help you now?

Remember: Don't leave your meeting with a farmer who is under lots of stress without agreeing to some kind of plan or next steps going forward. Make sure they understand that there are options available and there are people who care and can help, including counseling professionals if needed.

Michigan State University Extension. (n.d.). How to talk with farmers under stress.
https://www.canr.msu.edu/managing_farm_stress/how-to-talk-with-farmers-under-stress.pdf

TALKING ABOUT SUICIDE

“So there were lots of factors that stood in the way of them ever even considering going to get any help. So that’s why I think that the suicide rate is so high. And then the number of people that thought about suicide, the farmers, that is incredible to me.”

-Farmer Spouse

“And there’s probably more people that are willing to admit that they know somebody who took their own life as a result of the stress that they were facing, kind of on the farm kind of thing. So I think there’s definitely more conversations happening.”

-Extension Agent and Farmer

WHAT TO DO IF YOU'RE WORRIED ABOUT SUICIDE

If you think someone is thinking about suicide, the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention (AFSP) recommends that you assume you are the only one who will reach out. Don't leave it to someone else. Here are some ideas AFSP gives for how to help.

Don't be afraid to ask

Listen to their story, and let them know you care. Ask directly about suicide, calmly and without judgment. Research shows it will not put the idea in their head, or push them into action. Often, they'll be relieved someone cares enough to hear about their experience with suicidal thoughts.

- *“Are you thinking about killing yourself?”*
- *“Does it ever get so tough that you think about ending your life?”*
- Make sure not to sound like you're passing judgment (DON'T say: *“You're not thinking of doing something stupid, are you?”*) or make them feel guilty (DON'T say: *“Think of what it would do to your parents.”*).
- Instead, reassure them that you understand and care. *“I really care about you, and I want you to know you can talk to me. I won't judge you and will do everything I can to help.”*

If a person says they are thinking about suicide

- *Take the person seriously.*
- *Stay with them.*
- *Help them remove lethal means.*
- *Call the 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline.*
- *Take them to mental health services or an emergency room.*
- *Follow up with the individual.*

American Foundation for Suicide Prevention. (n.d.). What to do when someone is at risk.
<https://afsp.org/what-to-do-when-someone-is-at-risk/#if-a-person-says-they-are-considering-suicide>

More Details:

WHAT TO DO IF SOMEONE TELLS YOU THEY'RE THINKING ABOUT SUICIDE

If you ask, and someone says that they're having thoughts of suicide, it can be really scary. How should you respond? What can you do to connect them to help?

First of all, realize that someone opening up in this way is a positive thing because it's an opportunity to help. Here are some ways you can respond.

Let them know you're listening

First of all reassure them that you hear what they're saying and that you're taking them seriously. *"I'm so glad you're telling me about how much has been going on, and how you're feeling. Thank you for talking with me."*

Show your support

In your own way, make sure they know you're there with them and that you care. *"I'm right here with you." "Nothing you're going through changes how I feel about you and how awesome I think you are." "I love you no matter what, and we're going to get through this together."*

Encourage them to keep talking— and really listen

Let them know you want to hear more about how they're feeling, and what they're going through. *"Wow—that situation sounds really difficult." "How did that make you feel when that happened?"*

American Foundation for Suicide Prevention. (n.d.). What to do when someone is at risk.
<https://afsp.org/what-to-do-when-someone-is-at-risk/#if-a-person-says-they-are-considering-suicide>

Ask them about changes in their life and how they are coping

Find out how long it's been that the person has been feeling this way, and any changes it's caused in their life.

“How long have you felt this way? When did these feelings start?”

“Have these thoughts led to any changes in your life, like trouble sleeping, or keeping up with work?”

“Have you been getting out as much as before? Are you isolating yourself?”

If they talk about thinking about suicide

Stay calm—just because someone is having thoughts of suicide, it doesn't mean they're in immediate danger. Take the time to calmly listen to what they have to say, and ask some follow-up questions.

“How often are you having these thoughts?”

“When it gets really bad, what do you do?”

“What scares you about these thoughts?”

“What do you need to do to feel safe?”

Reassure them that help is available and that these feelings are a signal that it's time to talk to a mental health professional.

“The fact that you're having these thoughts tells me something significant is going on for you right now. The good news is that help is out there. I want to help you get connected to resources that can help.”

Help them connect

Sometimes making that first moment of contact to professional help can be the hardest. Offer to help them connect in whatever way you're comfortable with.

“I could call your insurance with you, or go online to find a mental health professional or substance use program. Or I could sit with you while you do it. We can figure it out together.”

“I could drive or walk you to your appointment. Then we could have coffee afterward.”

American Foundation for Suicide Prevention. (n.d.). What to do when someone is at risk.
<https://afsp.org/what-to-do-when-someone-is-at-risk/#if-a-person-says-they-are-considering-suicide>

If they're concerned about privacy

If the person is worried about others finding out that they're getting treatment, let them know their worries are mostly unfounded.

“Mental health treatment actually has even greater confidentiality rules than physical health treatment.”

If they ask you not to tell anyone, tell them you want to help them get the support they need—and that may involve enlisting the help of others. Encourage them to be part of the conversation that happens in reaching out for help. But make it clear that their safety is your priority.

What if they refuse?

Not everyone is ready right away. If someone you know is struggling refuses your suggestion of professional help (and if they aren't in immediate danger), be patient and don't push too hard.

“It's OK if you're not ready yet. I really hope you'll think about it. Let me know if you change your mind, and I can help you connect with care.”

“I know you're going through a lot, and I really believe it can make a big difference for your life, and your health. Just consider it for later, and know I'm here to help.”

“If you're not ready to go in and meet with someone in person, you could call the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline at 988. They can tell you more about what it might be like to work with a doctor, counselor, or therapist.”

You can also offer to speak with their primary care provider as a gentle next step—family and friends can provide information to healthcare providers without expecting a call back or for the doctor to provide any confidential health information back.

American Foundation for Suicide Prevention. (n.d.). What to do when someone is at risk.
<https://afsp.org/what-to-do-when-someone-is-at-risk/#if-a-person-says-they-are-considering-suicide>

TRAININGS RELATED TO SUICIDE PREVENTION AND MENTAL HEALTH

QPR 2-hour course

QPR stands for Question Persuade Refer—the three simple steps anyone can learn to help save a life from suicide. Just as people trained in CPR and the Heimlich Maneuver help save thousands of lives each year, people trained in QPR learn how to recognize the warning signs of a suicide crisis and question, persuade, and refer someone to help. Each year thousands of Americans, like you, are saying “Yes” to saving the life of a friend, colleague, sibling, or neighbor.

Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) 8-hour course

Mental Health First Aid is a course that teaches you how to identify, understand and respond to signs of mental illnesses and substance use disorders. The training gives you the skills to reach out and provide initial help and support to someone who may be developing a mental health or substance use problem or experiencing a crisis. This in-depth course provides case studies, video role-playing, and other interactive components.

Follow the link below to access trainings:

<https://www.farmandranchstress.com/training>

SUBSTANCE USE

“Let me say this, there’s a generation of them that there’s a lot of alcohol being used, and I know that. I mean, I’m just—there’s a lot of alcohol. I don’t think I see—I’ve heard drugs but I mean, I don’t ever see that, but you just know that that’s a stress reliever for most of them every night ... That’s one of those things that’s just a very, that’s very culturally is here. It’s in our area big time.”

-Farmer Spouse



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WHAT TO DO IF YOU SEE COPING THROUGH SUBSTANCE MISUSE

Coping with farm stress through substance use is not uncommon

- Endres & Wolf say coping with farm stress through substance use is common. Nearly 50% of rural Americans and 74% of farmers have been directly affected by opioid misuse, according to a 2017 survey by the National Farmers Union and the American Farm Bureau Federation.
- They note that challenges caused by the COVID-19 pandemic have also increased the use of alcohol and other substances. According to an article published in the Journal of the American Medical Association, as many as one in 10 adults reported starting or increasing the use of alcohol and/or drugs to help them cope with the stress of the pandemic.

What is considered excessive drinking

According to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), moderate drinking means consuming up to one standard drink per day or less if you're a woman, and up to two standard drinks per day or less if you're a man. One "standard drink" is:

- 12 fluid ounces of beer (about 5% alcohol)
- 5 fluid ounces of wine (about 12% alcohol)
- 1.5 ounces of hard liquor (about 40% alcohol)

Endres, K., & Wolf, M. (n.d.). Substance use in the farming community.
<https://farms.extension.wisc.edu/articles/substance-use-in-the-farming-community/>

Mayo Clinic Staff. (2022). Alcohol use disorder.
<https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/alcohol-use-disorder/symptoms-causes/syc-20369243>

Stallman, K. (2023). Raising alcohol awareness among farmers.
<https://www.siumed.edu/blog/raising-alcohol-awareness-among-farmers>

Here are some other useful definitions you should know (from Endres and Wolf)

- Heavy drinking is defined as eight or more standard drinks per week for a woman or 15 or more standard drinks for a man.
- Binge drinking is defined as consuming four or more drinks on a single occasion for a woman or five or more drinks on a single occasion for a man.
- Alcohol use disorder is a pattern of alcohol use that features excessive intake of alcohol, difficulty controlling or cutting back on alcohol intake, preoccupation with alcohol, and the continued use of alcohol even if it begins to cause problems.
- Drug abuse includes using illegal substances or using prescription medication in any way that is not prescribed by your doctor specifically for you. Some people think that if a drug is prescribed it must be safe in all situations—this is not true.

Signs of alcohol use disorder

- They are unable to limit how much they drink.
- They have a strong urge to drink.
- They spend a lot of time drinking, trying to drink, or recovering from drinking.
- They struggle to fulfill their responsibilities because of their drinking.
- They keep drinking even though their drinking is causing problems in their health, work, social life, family life, or finances.
- They start to cut back on work, time with family, hobbies, and other activities in order to drink.
- They develop a tolerance to alcohol (they have to consume more and more to feel the desired effect).
- They engage in risky behaviors while under the influence of alcohol, such as operating heavy machinery or driving.
- They frequently experience hangovers or withdrawal symptoms and may drink to avoid these symptoms.

Endres, K., & Wolf, M. (n.d.). Substance use in the farming community.
<https://farms.extension.wisc.edu/articles/substance-use-in-the-farming-community/>

Mayo Clinic Staff. (2022). Alcohol use disorder.
<https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/alcohol-use-disorder/symptoms-causes/syc-20369243>

Stallman, K. (2023). Raising alcohol awareness among farmers.
<https://www.siumed.edu/blog/raising-alcohol-awareness-among-farmers>

WHAT TO DO IF SOMEONE YOU CARE ABOUT DRINKS TOO MUCH?

The National Institute on Aging provides these steps:

Step 1: Talk

- Talk about your worries when the person is sober. Try to express what you think or feel, such as, “I am concerned about your drinking.”
- Provide facts. Some people find it helpful just to have more information.
- Try to avoid labels such as “alcoholic.”
- You could start the conversation with: “I want to share some things I’ve learned about how alcohol affects the health of adults,” or “If you ever think about making a change, I’ve heard of some tools that can help.”
- Ask if you can join in on a doctor or counselor appointment.

Step 2: Offer your help

- Suggest activities that don’t include drinking alcohol.
- Point the person toward helpful resources and tools, such as those found at Rethinking Drinking.
- Encourage counseling or attending a group meeting. Offer to drive the person to and from these meetings.
- Keep in mind that overcoming alcohol use disorder is an ongoing process that may often include setbacks.
- Be supportive during treatment, such as joining the person for family or group counseling meetings.

National Institute on Aging. (2022). How to help someone you know who drinks too much.

<https://www.nia.nih.gov/health/alcohol-misuse-or-alcohol-use-disorder/how-help-someone-you-know-who-drinks-too-much>

Step 3: Take care of yourself

- Caring for someone with alcohol misuse or use disorder can be stressful. It may help to seek support from friends, family, community, or counseling groups.
- Involve other family members or friends so you are not in this alone. Talk honestly about how you are feeling. Ask for the support or help you need.
- Try going to counseling or special meetings that offer support to families and friends of people with alcohol use disorders. There may be programs at your local hospital or clinic. For example, Al-Anon is a support group for friends and family of people with a drinking problem. Find a meeting near you by calling 888-425-2666.
- If you are experiencing symptoms of anxiety or depression, think about seeking professional help for yourself.

For more information about help for alcohol problems

Rethinking Drinking:

Alcohol and Your Health

www.rethinkingdrinking.niaaa.nih.gov

National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism, National Institutes of Health

888-696-4222

niaaaweb-r@exchange.nih.gov

www.niaaa.nih.gov

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration

877-726-4727

800-487-4889 (TTY)

samhsainfo@samhsa.hhs.gov

www.samhsa.gov

Alcoholics Anonymous

212-870-3400

www.aa.org

MORE RESOURCES FOR HELP

“We need this, especially if it’s concise like you mentioned. Here’s what to look for, here’s what to do, here’s what not to do. Here’s what to say, here’s not what to say. Just very simple, something that people can remember.”

-Farmer Spouse



WHERE TO FIND MORE RESOURCES FOR HELP

988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline

Contact: Dial 988

Website: <https://988lifeline.org/>

Call or chat on the website

Free and confidential emotional support is available to people in suicidal crisis or emotional distress

24 hours a day, 7 days a week

Georgia Crisis and Access Line (GCAL)

Contact: 1-800-715-4225

Website: <https://dbhdd.georgia.gov/>

<https://dbhdd.georgia.gov/regional-field-offices> (go here to find your regional field office)

Call or text available

Free and confidential

Available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, and 365 days a year to help you or someone you care for in a crisis

Provides telephonic crisis intervention services

Dispatches mobile crisis teams

Assists individuals in finding an open crisis or detox bed in the state

Links individuals with urgent appointment services

Farm Aid

Contact: 1-800-327-6243

Farmer resource network request for assistance: <https://www.farmaid.org/our-work/resources-for-farmers/online-request-for-assistance-form/>

Farmer hotline is free and confidential—if you need to talk to someone directly, they are there to listen

Monday—Friday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Eastern time

Farm Crisis Center

Website: <https://farmcrisis.nfu.org/>

Even in the best of times, farming can be an incredibly high-stress occupation. Unpredictable weather, crop disease, volatile markets, heavy workloads, and social isolation are just a handful of the challenges that farmers may face.

Georgia Council for Recovery

Contact: 844-326-5400

Website: <https://gasubstanceabuse.org/>

Call or text available

CARES Warm Line is free and confidential

Provides education & training

Influences public policy

Provides advocacy

Veterans Crisis Line

Contact: 1-800-273-8255

Website: <https://www.veteranscrisisline.net/>

Are you a veteran in crisis or concerned about one?

Call (and press 1) or text: 838255

Online chat available on the website

American Farm Bureau Farm State of Mind

Website: <https://www.fb.org/initiative/farm-state-of-mind>

Resource directory and other information to reduce stigma and promote farmer mental health wellness

UGA EXTENSION RESOURCES FOR HELP

UGA EXTENSION IS HERE FOR YOU EVERY DAY – during the good times and the tough times. No matter the help you need, our team offers **24/7 local support and online resources.**

GROW STRONGER WITH US.



For local support within your community, **contact your county Extension office**, where you'll find UGA Extension personnel from your neighborhood.
extension.uga.edu/county-offices



Find research-based tips on the **Rural Georgia Growing Stronger website** to find out how to manage stress, stay healthy, and improve financial health.
extension.uga.edu/rural



Visit the **Georgia Farm and Ranch Stress Assistance Network** for resources developed by our partners across the Southeast.
www.farmandranchstress.com



When an emergency hits, be prepared and know how to respond with these expert resources.
extension.uga.edu/emergencies





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Circular 1314

May 2024

Published by the University of Georgia in cooperation with Fort Valley State University, the U.S. Department of Agriculture, and counties of the state. For more information, contact your local UGA Cooperative Extension office. *The University of Georgia College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences (working cooperatively with Fort Valley State University, the U.S. Department of Agriculture, and the counties of Georgia) offers its educational programs, assistance, and materials to all people without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability, gender identity, sexual orientation or protected veteran status and is an Equal Opportunity, Affirmative Action organization.*

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THRIVING ON THE FARM



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