

# STRESS ON THE FARM

< a resource for farmers, families, and communities >

**IOWA STATE  
UNIVERSITY**  
Extension and Outreach



**IOWA DEPARTMENT OF  
AGRICULTURE &  
LAND STEWARDSHIP**



## OUR SPECIALISTS ARE HERE TO HELP!

Research-based solutions from professionals located right here in Iowa.

### Iowa Concern 800-447-1985

Available all hours, all days  
Stress counseling, financial concerns, legal rights

[extension.iastate.edu/iowaconcern](http://extension.iastate.edu/iowaconcern)

### Healthy Families 800-369-2229

Available all hours, all days  
Prenatal, child health, and women's health care questions and information

[womenshealthiowa.info](http://womenshealthiowa.info)

### Iowa 2-1-1 2-1-1

Available all hours, all days  
Resource referral for housing, health, employment, food, family, transportation, education, and legal assistance

[211iowa.org](http://211iowa.org)

### Teen Line 800-443-8336

Available all hours, all days  
Personal and health-related information and referral

Dial 711 for TTY/TDD  
Telecommunication Device for the Deaf

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# ON THE FARM: STRESS IS REAL

Left untreated, stressors may lead to mental health and substance use issues, including death by suicide. Learn to recognize stress in yourself, family members, friends, neighbors, or others. Know when and how to get help and offer support. **YOU ARE NOT ALONE.**

## Signs and Symptoms of Mental Health Concerns

- Changes in routines or social activities
- Decline in the care of domestic animals
- Increase in illness or other chronic conditions
- Increase in farm accidents
- Decline in appearance of the farmstead
- Signs of stress in children including struggles with school
- Decreased interest in activities or events

## Warning Signs of Suicidal Intent

- Talking about suicide and history of suicide of family member or friend
- Changes in sleep and/or eating patterns
- Stopped taking medication as prescribed or hoarding medication
- Increased use of drugs or alcohol
- Preoccupation with death
- Giving away possessions
- Obtaining firearms
- Withdrawing from family, friends, and routines that were pleasurable
- Talking about being a burden to others
- Feeling trapped – like there is no way out



## Resources for You and Your Family

Farm stress is the stress experienced by farmers and their families as a result of the unique agricultural work environment. Take advantage of these resources specific to the ag community in Iowa:

### Workshops

#### Question. Persuade. Refer. (QPR)

[extension.iastate.edu/humansciences/QPR](http://extension.iastate.edu/humansciences/QPR)

Say “Yes” to saving the life of a friend, colleague, sibling, or neighbor. Learn how to recognize the warning signs of a suicide crisis and how to question, persuade, and refer someone to help. This program is currently offered at no cost due to special grant funding.

### Individual Consultations

#### Financial Education Consultation

Concerned about your finances but not sure where to start? One of our ISU Extension and Outreach Human Sciences specialists can meet with you one-on-one to walk through ideas and options to revise a budget, keep up with bills, pay down debt, and connect with community resources to stretch reduced incomes—totally free of charge. Leave a phone message with the Iowa Concern Hotline (800-447-1985) and someone will get back to you within 48 hours.

#### Farm Financial Planning

[www.extension.iastate.edu/farmanalysis](http://www.extension.iastate.edu/farmanalysis)

ISU Extension and Outreach’s farm financial analysis program offers one-on-one financial counseling, a computerized analysis of the farm business, and referral to other services.

### Online

#### Farm Stress

[extension.iastate.edu/humansciences/farmstress](http://extension.iastate.edu/humansciences/farmstress)

State, regional, and national resources for stress assistance.

#### North Central Farm and Ranch Stress Assistance Center

[farmstress.org](http://farmstress.org)

Stress management and mental health resources and services for ag producers and stakeholders.

#### Iowa Farm Bureau - Farm and Rural Stress

[iowafarmbureau.com/Stress-Mental-Health-Resources](http://iowafarmbureau.com/Stress-Mental-Health-Resources)

Expert help and links to resources for dealing with stress or crisis.

#### Farm Wellness Alliance

[farmfamilywellness.com](http://farmfamilywellness.com)

Prepaid stress management and one-on-one coaching for Iowa farm families through 24/7 counseling services via phone, text, telehealth, and app.

#### Iowa’s Center for Agricultural Safety and Health (I-CASH)

[icash.public-health.uiowa.edu](http://icash.public-health.uiowa.edu)

Statewide prevention and education initiatives to improve the health and safety of Iowa’s agricultural population.



**If you are a farmer in crisis, or know of someone in need, connect with behavioral health or substance use treatment services.**

### Immediate need (in crisis or an emergency)

- Call the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline, 988 OR
- Call emergency services (911) or go to your local emergency room OR
- Call Your Life Iowa, 855-581-8111 or Text 855-895-8398

### Non-immediate need

- Call Iowa Concern Hotline, 800-477-1985 OR
- Call Iowa Warm Line, 844-775-9276

### YOUR FEEDBACK MATTERS!



<https://go.iastate.edu/DGDZED>

Scan the code or visit the web address to tell us how you are using this handout.

## Contact a Behavioral Health or Substance Use Provider

Do you have health insurance that covers behavioral health care or substance use services?

### IF NO

- Call for help. Dial 2-1-1 to connect with an operator who can refer you to mental health providers and free clinics in your area.
- Visit the Iowa Mental Health and Disability Services website, [iowamhdsregions.org](http://iowamhdsregions.org).
- Search online. Try these search terms:
  - “Free mental health services in [your county name] county Iowa”
  - “Catholic Charities Iowa”
  - “Lutheran Services Iowa”

### IF YES

- Contact your insurance carrier. Ask questions to understand your options:
  - What is my behavioral health or substance use treatment coverage?
  - What is the coverage amount per therapy session? How much might I have to pay?
  - Is there a co-payment? How much?
  - How many therapy sessions or what type of treatment options does my plan cover?
  - How do I know which providers are in-network?
  - How much does my insurance pay for an out-of-network provider?
  - Is approval required from my primary care physician?
- Identify a potential behavioral health or substance use provider. Ask your primary care provider for a local recommendation, or search online. Try these websites:
  - Your Life Iowa, [yourlifeiowa.org](http://yourlifeiowa.org)
  - Psychology Today, [psychologytoday.com/us/therapists/iowa](http://psychologytoday.com/us/therapists/iowa)
  - Iowa Psychological Association, [iowapsychology.org/find-a-psychologist](http://iowapsychology.org/find-a-psychologist)

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**SCHEDULE** your first meeting with a provider. Ask these questions:

- Do you accept my insurance?
- Are you taking new clients?
- Do you offer a sliding scale for payment, or is there a reduced cost if I pay out of pocket?
- Do you offer in-person care, telehealth, or both?
- How long will I have to wait for an initial appointment?

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**ATTEND** your first appointment. You likely will be asked to complete forms before or at the first appointment such as:

- Detailed medical, behavioral health, and substance use history
- Informed consent statement (information on how services work with your provider)
- Confidential release of information forms if you want your treatment information shared with anyone, such as your primary care provider (Note: you can choose to have no information shared if you wish.)
- Financial status form, if seeking financial assistance or a reduced fee

Meet with your provider. Usually, the first meeting is a chance for you and your provider to discuss the things that are motivating you to seek care. The provider will likely ask you about many different parts of your life (sleep, work, support system, significant stressors, substance use, etc.) to better understand your experience. This also helps the provider to better join with you in addressing your concerns.