

Farm Stress: You're Not Alone

Mental health is real and it's amongst us. According to the Center for Disease Control, suicide rates in agriculture are higher than any other occupation. In fact, they are said to be 50% higher today than they were during the farm crisis of the 1980s. Access to mental health services remain limited to farmers because of the rural nature of their occupations. It was said by Rev. Robert Grimm during a recent funeral of one of my agriculture friends that fell victim to suicide that: "Suicide is a horrible thing. We recognize that is a permanent solution to a short term problem, for suicide takes one person's pain and gives it to all the people that love you the most. It's not good, not at all."

Farmer stress can be fueled by adverse weather conditions, family problems, financial stress, long hours, and heavy workloads just to name a few. Mental and emotional stress, substance abuse, depression, anxiety and suicide are all tolls that can be taken on a farmer/rancher. Our counterpart in Douglas County, Kansas created a video called "Farmer Stress: You're Not Alone." If you struggle to find resources, the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline (1-800-273-8255) is available 24 hrs/day, 7 days per week for ANY mental health help, not just suicide. When a Kansas registered phone calls that number, they will be transferred to the Headquarters Counseling Center located in Lawrence, KS. As shown in the video, that center is directed by a farmer and is working on making sure lifeline volunteers are trained in making those personnel connections with farmers.

The video created by K-State Research and Extension/Douglas County titled **Farm Stress: You're Not Alone** can be found on YouTube by searching the name, going directly to the link at

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2SDszgQciiA>, or we have posted it to our website at: https://www.butler.k-state.edu/agriculture/ag_info.html .

Please know, you are not alone and do not hesitate to pick up the phone and call.

