



## Farm Stress Program Details & Topical Information

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#SoyHelp

### Sometimes You Need Help, and Sometimes You are the Help

#### *Resources for Farm Families*

- Farm families face unique stressors, including financial challenges and family-farming relationships that blur the line between their business and personal lives. These stressors can affect the entire family and may lead to physical illness, depression, substance abuse or even suicide.
- Especially with children now home from school due to COVID-19 and the disruption in both their education and social activities outside of the farm, it is important to be able to talk openly with family members regarding mental health.
- If a family member recognizes some telltale signs of farm stress, the experts suggest a few immediate ways to positively improve the situation.
  - Listen, don't blame. While time to talk on the farm may be rare, it's important, so listen to what needs to be said and show empathy.
  - Recognize the problem, don't avoid it. Family members can give encouragement and provide resources for help.
  - Cultural and religious beliefs can have a positive impact. For many people, faith is the strongest hope to hang onto.

#### *Building Strong Communities Around Mental Health Awareness*

- Strong rural communities support those in need by being willing to talk about mental health and by guiding community members to appropriate resources.
- We have compiled a list of [state-specific resources](#) to ensure that growers are aware of what their community is doing to help alleviate farmer stress. [National resources](#) are also available.
- Community cohesion can be a protective factor against rural stress, depression and suicide. Bankers, lawyers, agricultural cooperative employees, doctors, pastors, teachers, and neighbors all play a role in breaking down the stigma around mental health issues, in noticing changes in individuals' attitudes and behaviors, and in suggesting resources.

*While these resources are by no means exhaustive, ASA hopes they will be helpful in seeking qualified professional care.*