

Mental Health - Faith, Farmers & Families

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Introduction

Even in good times, farmers face a unique set of challenges when it comes to rural stress and mental health. The complexity of farming, along with isolation, shame over economic distress, and a lack of mental health resources is fueling this mental health crisis. In response to the higher rates of suicide among farmers and the limited access to mental health services, the University of Missouri Extension with USDA NIFA grant funds launched the Missouri Farm and Ranch Stress Assistance Network (FRSAN) to address the rising mental health crisis in farming communities.

Goals

- Increase access and utilization of free telehealth counseling sessions.
- Provide mental and behavioral support services and training in all counties.
- Provide training for community members who work with youth.
- Provide mental health training in 100% of Missouri counties.

Acknowledgements

- St. Paul's Lutheran Church, Cole Camp, MO
- Missouri Department of Agriculture
- University of Missouri Extension
- University of Missouri School of Medicine

Results

PROTECTING OUR FARMERS

Agriculture remains the backbone of Missouri's strong economy, supporting both rural and urban communities. It is critical to help Missouri farmers, ranchers, and their families remain safe, healthy, and productive.

2023 ANNUAL IMPACTS

1,391

FARMERS AND ALLIES SERVED

100%

COUNTIES SERVED

\$247,413

TOTAL VALUE OF SERVICES

74

Workshops

42

Farmer Clients

Served via Teletherapy Counseling

996

People Completed

Mental Health First Aid Training

46

People Completed

Question Persuade Refer Training

307

People Completed

Weathering the Storm Training

Client Quotes

- "Use 988 for myself when no one is available to talk with [me] about my family member."
- "I'm capable of helping our students. I feel more confident to help our students."
- "I learned that some of the feelings/emotions [that] I've experienced when helping others are valid."
- "I learned 988 isn't just for suicide. Anyone can call."
- "I learned the importance of self-care."
- "I will work with other staff members to review our policies and procedures to see where we need to make updates and then retrain staff on policies."
- "I plan to speak with a family member regarding concerns about feeling sad or anxious. I now have better tools to open the conversation."

Description

One prime example is the Mental Health - Faith, Farmers, and Families initiative in Cole Camp, Missouri that brought together the MU Extension Farm & Ranch Stress Team, University of Missouri College of Arts & Sciences Psychological Services Clinic, University of Missouri School of Medicine, and the rural faith-based community of St. Paul's Lutheran Church to:

- Host a family farm concert featuring the Peterson Brothers band
- Partner with a clinic for farmers
- Develop local networks of community allies that connect farmers, ranchers and families to resources (MU Extension Mental Health Tool Kit)
- Offer free stress and mental health programs
- Provide free telehealth counseling services
- Fun family activities with a mental-health focus, and
- Deliver targeted, faith-based storytelling education about stress and mental-health

North Central Farm and Ranch Stress Assistance Network Resources

