

Washington State University Voucher Program



WSU EXTENSION
Skagit County

Farm Stress and Mental Health *Offering a way forward*

Agriculture is known to be a dangerous occupation full of potential stressors like weather, changing economic markets and machinery breakdowns, requiring flexibility and adaptability when external and internal resources might already be scarce. When stressors start to compound, many farmers experience excessive stress and feel overwhelmed, making it hard to move forward to positive solutions. High levels of stress and easy access to means, such as guns or poisons, contribute to high rates of suicide in agricultural workers.

To prevent agricultural suicides, Washington State University Extension, in collaboration with the WSU Psychology Clinic and a private foundation donation created the WSU Voucher Program.

Don McMoran, D.W., Agriculture & Natural Resources Extension Faculty & Director
Cornelia Kirchhoff, Ph.D., Associate Director, WSU Psychology Clinic



In June of 2021, Extension Professor Don McMoran developed a partnership with Dr. Conny Kirchoff of the WSU Psychology Clinic, starting the voucher program that allows agricultural workers to receive up to six telehealth counseling sessions at no cost. To receive services, participants call the WSU Psychology Clinic at **(509) 335-3587**, mention the Farm Stress Counseling Program, and provide their name, phone number, and email to set up an appointment. The Clinic then asks participants to complete intake paperwork at <https://psychologyclinic.wsu.edu/>



Free Therapy Voucher Program

FREE THERAPY VOUCHER PROGRAM

Does life just not seem to get better?
Do you wish you could go back to how you used to be?

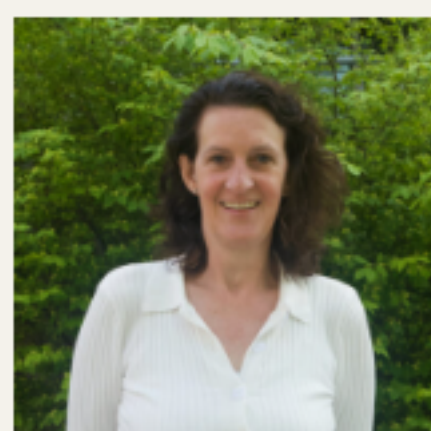
Farmers, ranchers, farmworkers, and their families, continue to meet the onslaught of heavy demands that never seem to stop. Many of us have experienced a crisis in the last year, or we are currently in a crisis.

The voucher program offers 6 free online sessions with a trained psychologist, to help you get where you want to be.
Back on the farm, back with your family, back in the saddle.



What would I gain by getting counseling?

Meet Conny



Hi, my name is Conny Kirchoff (PhD), and I am a licensed Psychologist in WA and ID.

I partnered up with Farm Response in the hopes of being able to serve farmers and their families in navigating stress, providing assistance in overcoming adversity, and support community. I would love to answer any questions you might have and look forward to working with you.

Special accommodations are provided to farmers, ranchers and farm workers whose primary language is Spanish, using translation services, and participants without internet access, using telephone options.

To date, the program has been utilized by nine (9) participants, with an uptick of numbers after specific efforts were made to advertise the program. In addition, work on decreasing stigma around farmer mental health through direct promotion at fairs, workshops and conferences, brochures, and video material has helped increase participation. A marketing campaign is planned to encourage more farmers, ranchers and farm workers to utilize the WSU Voucher program and decrease stigma around mental health in this community.



Our marketing strategy focused on destigmatizing stress and struggles, and decreasing hurdles to ask for support. Our video aims at demystifying therapy, and establishing connection and relatability with our therapist Conny.



Visit our website here:
<https://extension.wsu.edu/skagit/free-therapy-voucher-program/>



Participants had the following comments:

"I am so glad you are focusing on us (agricultural community);"
"This has helped me determine what is most important for me and using my values moving forward;"
"Reaching out to other people in my farm community was a life saver."



Marketing brochures available on our website. Free to download and print from any device.