



Supporting Farmers & Ranchers in Stress

*Kansas Ag Growth Summit
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mi DEPARTMENT OF
AGRICULTURE



www.KansasAgStress.org



**Kansas Rural Family Helpline
866-327-6578**

**Kansas Agricultural Mediation
Services**

Providing Kansans the resources they need to help cope with ag-related stress.

Kansas farmers, ranchers and their families are the backbone of this state, providing us with high-quality crops, livestock and dairy products. Unfortunately, the stress that comes with these responsibilities can be overwhelming. Unpredictable weather, heavy workloads and financial worries can sometimes take their toll on farm families and lead to mental and emotional distress, substance abuse, anxiety, depression and even suicide. Caring for your own health and wellness in this high-stress profession is often overlooked but is just as critical as caring for your farm business.

Resources compiled on this website can help care for and assist Kansas farmers and ranchers in their well-being. You'll find help with stress management, financial and legal challenges, and many other needs. As more tools are developed, this website will be updated and serve as a hub of current information and resources.

If you are a farmer in crisis, or know of someone in need of immediate assistance, contact your local [Kansas Community Mental Health Center](#) or call the [National Suicide Prevention Line](#) at 1-800-273-8255.

MENTAL HEALTH

Local and national resources for farmers and ranchers to help

SUPPORT

Support is available for everyone in the

SERVICES

Providing resources to help you and your family deal with

HELP SOMEONE

If someone you know is struggling emotionally or

**Business Assistance
Disaster Assistance
Financial Counseling
Legal Assistance
Mental Health Counseling
Substance Abuse**



Photo by K8 on Unsplash



Dairy farmers dumping milk amid COVID-19: Pandemic's impact on the dairy industry

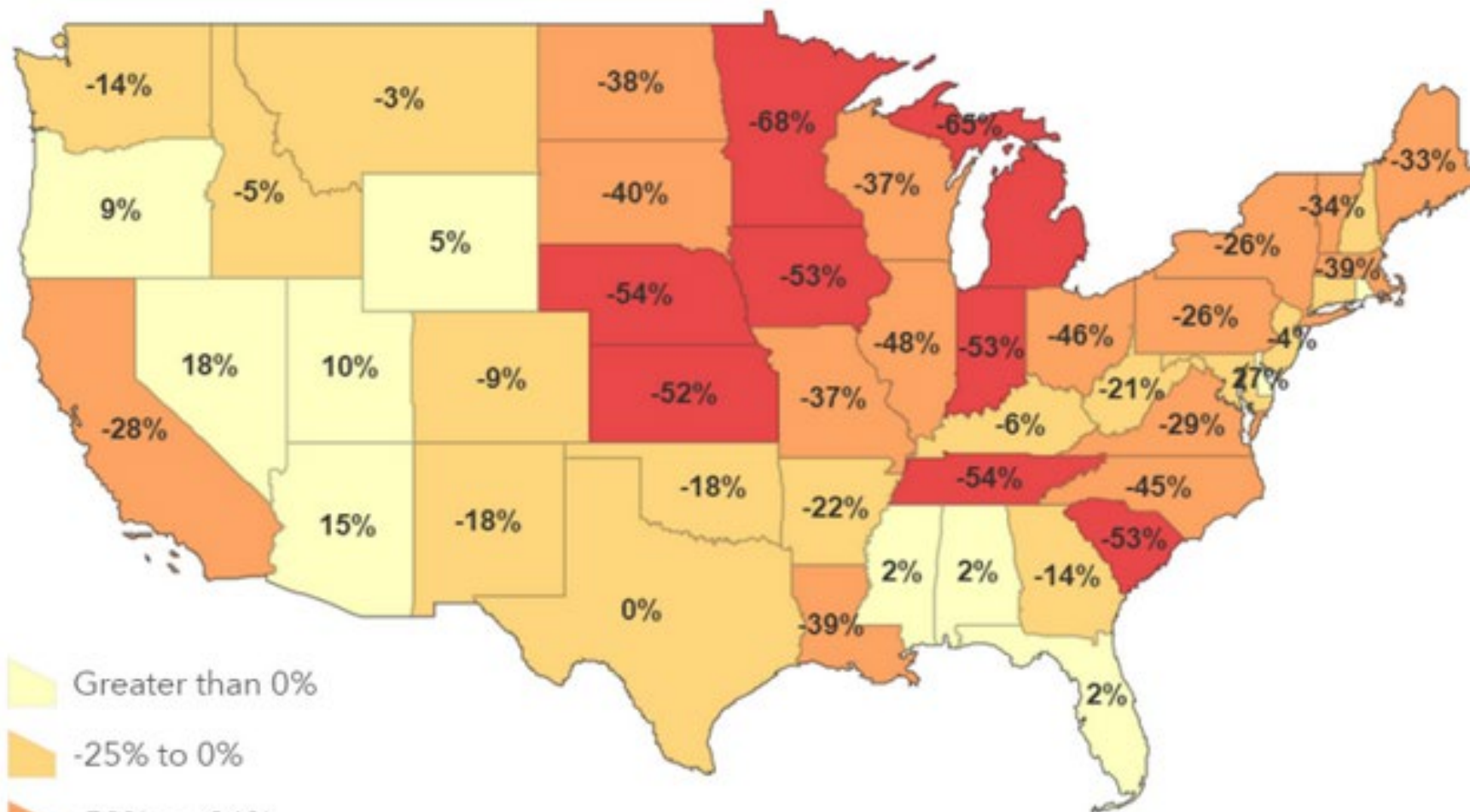
Coronavirus Forces Farmers to Destroy Their Crops

Dumped Milk, Smashed Eggs, Plowed Vegetables: Food Waste of the Pandemic

With restaurants, hotels and schools closed, many of the nation's largest



Changes in State-Level Net Farm Income (Avg. of 2018-2019 versus Avg. 2011-2013)



ag economic
insights



The 11th Commandment

Consider these inherent challenges

RESPONSIBILITY



CONTROL

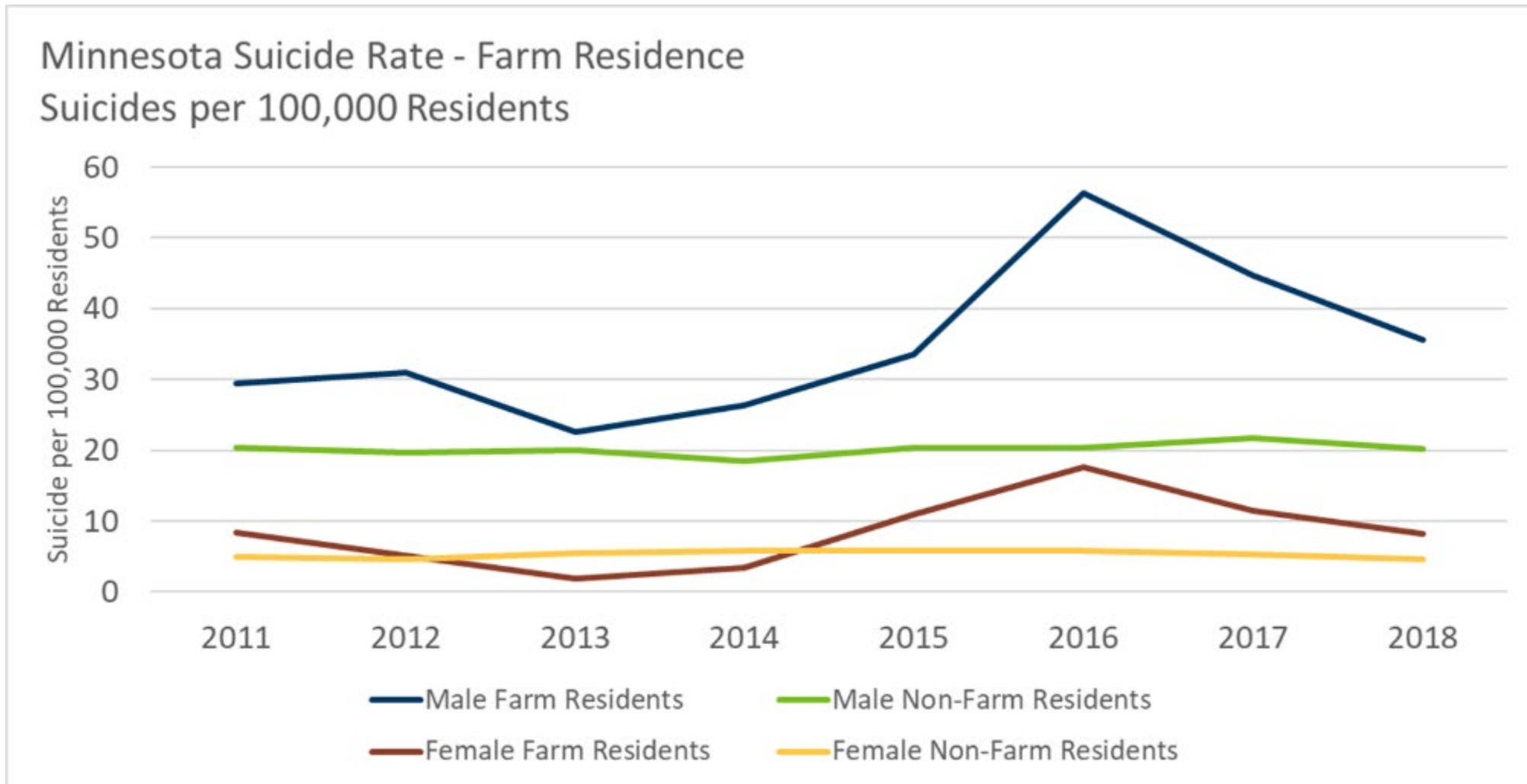
- Farmers work where they live
- Coworkers can be mostly family
- Multiple roles
- Competition and envy
- Loss of peers/community
- Praise/blame whipsaw

What Happens?

- Sleep disturbance
- Weight loss/gain
- Hygiene
- GI problems
- Irritability
- Withdrawal
- Depression
- Anxiety
- Substance overuse
- Relationship problems
- Paralysis/inability to make decisions

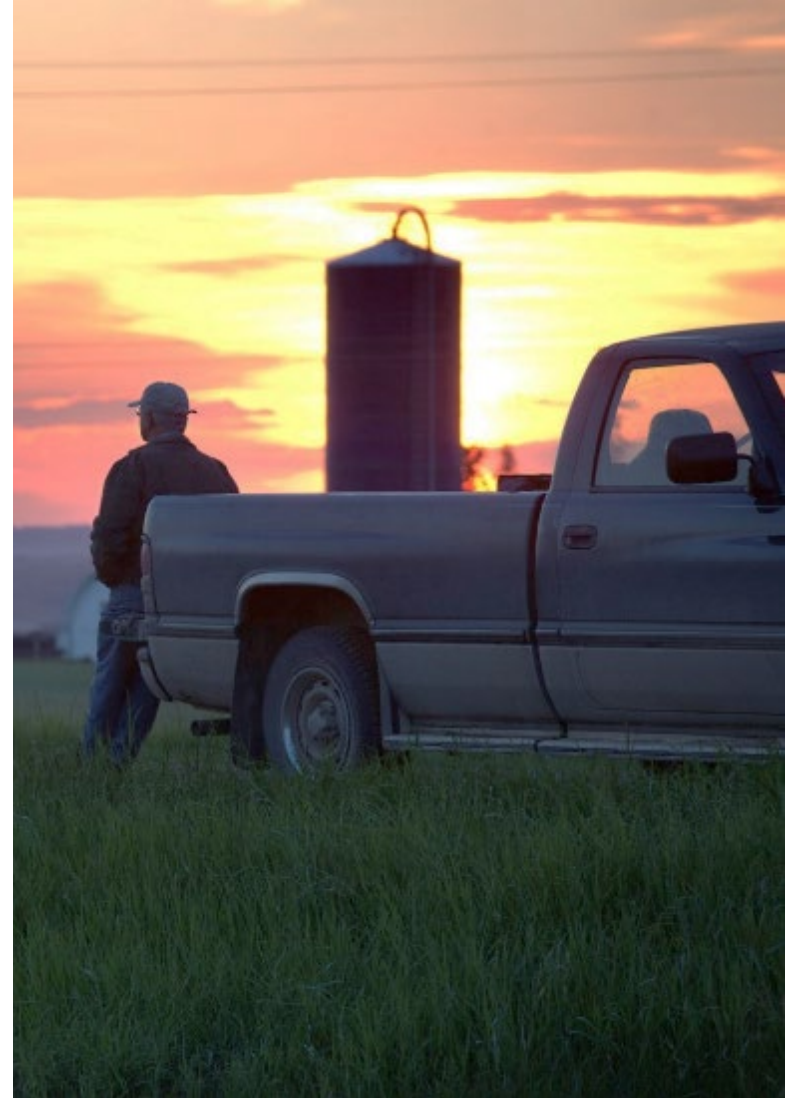
Yearly suicide rates - farm residents

(E. Zabel et al.)



Why Don't More Farmers Seek Help?

- I should be able to handle this myself.
- Where would I go?
- They wouldn't understand.
- Other people would find out.
- Costs too much.
- I don't have time.
- Nobody can fix what's wrong.



Dedicated Farmer Counselors/Therapists

Monica McConkey



218-280-7785

- Meet 1:1 with farmers, farm families
- No insurance; no paperwork
- No charge: funded by MN Legislature (\$238K/yr)

Ted Matthews



320-266-2390

24/7 Confidential Hotline

MINNESOTA FARM & RURAL HELPLINE

minnesotafarmstress.com

CALL 833-600-2670

TEXT *farmstress* to 898211

EMAIL farmstress@state.mn.us

Need help finding a confidential
financial or legal advisor?
Feeling worried or blue and
need a listening ear? 24/7



Minnesota Farm Advocates

- Since 1984
- Peer farmers
- Natural or financial disaster
- In the farmer's corner
- Help navigate solutions to difficult and complex problems
 - Lending/lender negotiation, mediation, farm programs, crisis counseling, disaster programs, legal and/or social services
- 2021: ~8,707 hours with clients



651-201-6311

Mobile Crisis Teams

Intensive, local, face-to-face short-term mental health services. During a crisis, can help people return to their baseline level of functioning.

mn DEPARTMENT OF
HUMAN SERVICES

<https://mn.gov/dhs/crisis>



CELL: **27 47 47

Financial Issues

Farmer-Lender Mediation



Rural Finance Authority

A screenshot of a Rural Finance Authority application form. The form is titled "1. TYPE OF MORTGAGE AND TERMS OF LOAN" and "2. PROPERTY INFORMATION AND POL". It contains various fields for borrower information, property details, and loan terms. A large red stamp with the word "Approved" is overlaid on the form. The form is divided into sections: I. TYPE OF MORTGAGE AND TERMS OF LOAN, II. PROPERTY INFORMATION AND POL, III. BORROWER INFORMATION, and IV. EMPLOYMENT INFORMATION. The form is dated 10/1/14 and is page 1 of 4.

Coping with Farm & Rural Stress Brochure

- Free print copies: 651-201-6012
- Web site with hyperlinks
www.minnesotafarmstress.com
- Printable PDF online, too



Down on the Farm Kit

Down on the Farm

SUPPORTING FARMERS
IN STRESSFUL TIMES



Slide set + facilitators' guide
Local experts and resource people
Free - No license required
Adapting/modifying encouraged

www.minnesotafarmstress.com



Down on the Farm: Supporting Farmers in Stressful Times

Facilitator's Guide

Stress factors are high in agriculture. Farmers and ranchers face financial problems, price and marketing uncertainties, farm transfer issues, production challenges, family tension, and more.

This workshop is designed for people who interact with producers.

- Maybe they want to help but aren't sure what to say or do.
- Maybe they find themselves having to deliver difficult news to farmers.

This workshop teaches information and skills that help people recognize and respond when they suspect a farmer or farm family member might need help.

You do not need to be certified to use these materials and do not have to sign any agreement or pay any fees for them. We encourage you to freely adapt them for your presenters, audience, and region.

Please acknowledge the Minnesota Department of Agriculture, AgCentric Northern Center of Agricultural Excellence, and NCR-SARE.



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In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, this information is available in alternative forms of communication upon request by calling 651-201-6000. TTY users can call the Minnesota Relay Service at 711. The MDA is an equal opportunity employer and provider.

“You are not alone.”



Podcasts at www.rrfn.com/transFARMation



- How Not to let the Farm Wreck your Marriage
- Life After Farming
- **It's OK to not be OK – seeing a therapist**
- Suicide: Losing a Husband and Partner; Losing a Son; Dealing with the Uncontrollable
- After a Farm Accident, Attitude is Everything
- If your Horse is Dead, it's not going to Get you to Town
- Ostrich Syndrome
- Coping with COVID



USDA Farm Stress Block Grant

- Farm Transition Support Teams, Facilitator Training
- Indigenous Food Producer Resiliency
- Workshops about Managing Stress/Enhancing Wellness for Immigrant & BIPOC Farmers
- Attorney Education and Resources to Reduce Farmer Stress
- Latino Farmer Retreat
- Indigenous Ricing, Processing, and Personal Growth Retreat for Women
- Farm Couple Marriage/ Partnership Retreats
- *safeTALK* T4T
- Psychological Autopsies - Suicide
- Suicide Prevention Conference for Faith Leaders
- Expand *TransFARMat*ion to Southern MN
- Professional Development Training for Farm Transition Facilitators
- 4-H Leader training & Programming
- Linking Stress & Safety for Farm Youth
- Connection & Social Support for Urban Farmers

Men's Sheds

- Activity clubs for senior guys
- Australia
- Self-directed, “Shoulder-to-Shoulder”
- ↓loneliness/isolation; ↑health outcomes



Collaboration → Amplification

- Commodity groups
- Minnesota Farm Bureau
- Minnesota Farmers Union
- MN State Farm Business Management
- USDA Farm Service Agency
- U of M Extension
- Upper Midwest Center for Ag Safety & Health
- MN Depts of Health Human Services



Jason Rosewell for Unsplash

What questions or comments
do you have for me?

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