



Managing Ourselves Optimally During Uncertain Times

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Ag in Uncertain Times
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<http://www.farmmanagement.org/aginuncertaintimes/>



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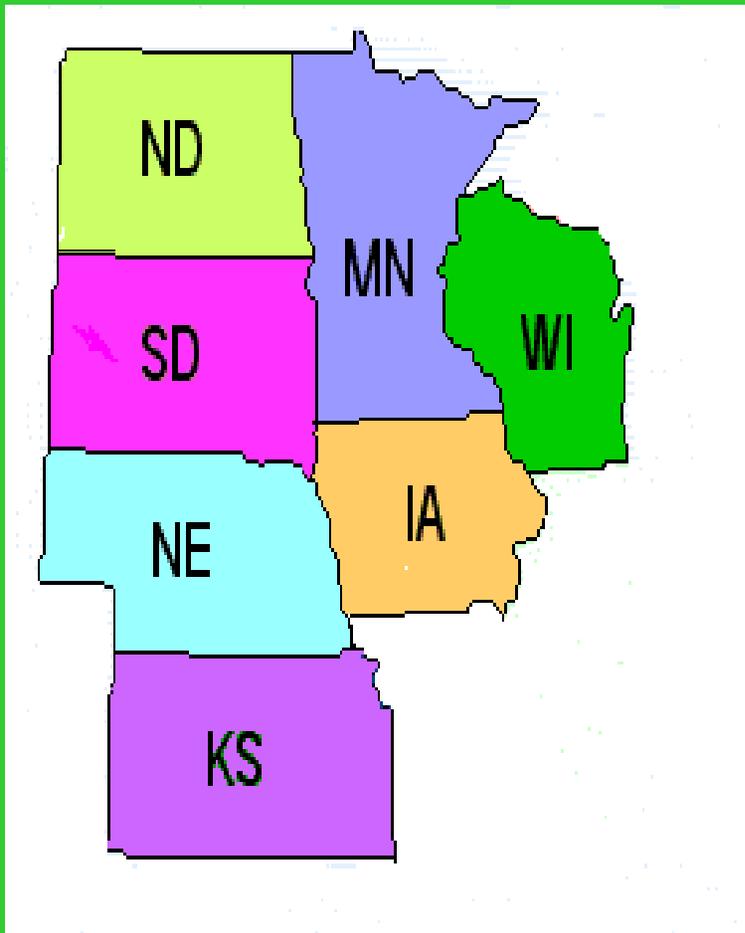
www.agriwellness.org

***Building hope and health in the
rural agricultural community***

AgriWellness – Building Hope and Health in the Rural Community

Who We Are

AgriWellness was founded in 2001 to provide administrative support, technical assistance and provider training in the Sowing the Seeds of Hope region (i.e., Iowa, Kansas, Minnesota, Nebraska, North Dakota, South Dakota and Wisconsin). We build culturally competent, accessible, affordable behavioral health services for the agriculture community.



Sowing the Seeds of Hope

Farm Crisis Hotlines

Iowa Concern Hotline: 800-447-1985

<http://extension.iastate.edu/iowaconcern>

Kansas Rural Family Helpline: 866-327-6578

<http://www.humec.k-state.edu/fshs/pfws/krfhprogram.html>

Minnesota Crisis Connection: 866-379-6363

<http://www.crisis.org>

Nebraska Rural Response Hotline: 800-464-0258

<http://uccnebraska.org/mission/RuralLife.html>

2-1-1 ND

<http://www.mhand.org>

South Dakota Rural Helpline: 800-664-1349

<http://www.rapidcitydiocese.org/Home/HomePage.htm>

Wisconsin Farm Center: 800-942-2474

<http://www.datcp.state.wi.us/core/agriculture/farm-center>

Characteristics of Callers to the Sowing the Seeds of Hope Hotlines/Helplines

- Reasons for calling the hotlines:
 - Marital/family concerns – 24.6%
 - Problems coping with daily activities – 27.7%
 - Feeling Depressed – 27.7%
 - Alcohol/drug abuse – 4.9%
 - Gambling – .6%
 - Stress over finances – 14.3%

Characteristics of Callers to the Sowing the Seeds of Hope Hotlines/Helplines (Cont.)

- 79% lived on farms and were farmers
- 11% lived on farms and were connected with agriculture but were not farmers
- 10% were farmers and lived in town
- 1.6% of callers (i.e., 685 out of 43,852 callers) reported suicidal ideation; 77 persons reported a suicide and 56 persons had attempted suicide
- 54.5% of the callers were female

Characteristics of Callers to the Sowing the Seeds of Hope Hotlines/Helpines (Cont.)

- 88.7% of 43,852 callers were adults, ages 18 – 64
- 10.2% were adults older than 64 years
- 1.1% were children and adolescents under 18 years
- 86% were White/Non-Hispanic people
- 2.7% were Black/African-Americans
- 1.9% were American Indians
- 1.1% were Hispanic
- 8.3% were two or more races or not reported

Managing Our Behavior

Behavior, like a feed ration, has ingredients that can be varied to maximize our well-being: what we consume, how much and how hard we work, sleep, recreate, pray, laugh, talk and so forth.

The Arousal-Depletion Cycle*

- The individual appraises the situation as threatening.
- The sympathetic nervous system becomes aroused with a flood of neurotransmitter chemicals which prepare the individual to *fight* the threat or take *flight* from the threat or simply freeze.
- Eventually, arousal depletes the nervous system of neurotransmitters, resulting in deficiencies of neurotransmitters normally associated with wellbeing, chiefly serotonin and norepinephrine.
- Now depleted of essential neurotransmitters and as a result of the accumulation of cortisol, the individual feels tired but irritable, lethargic, and in short, depressed.
- Often additional threats trigger repetition of the arousal-depletion cycle, leading to adaptational fatigue and chronic severe depression.
- Multiple stressors wear down the individual's ability to cope physiologically and psychologically, resulting in exhaustion, depression and even compromise to the immune system's capacity to ward off disease

Adapted from Antai-Otong, D. (1995). Psychiatric Nursing: Biological and behavioral concepts. Philadelphia, PA: WB Saunders.

Factors That Increase Distress, Depression and Suicide:

- Severe economic stress, leading to restructuring or forced sale of livestock and/or equipment and land
- Exposures to certain classes of farm pesticides, including organophosphates, carbamates and chlorinated substances
- Sleep deprivation
- Serious physical illnesses

Factors That Increase Distress, Depression and Suicide (cont.):

- Recent loss of one or more loved ones
- Unemployment
- Entanglement in illegal activities
- Divorce
- Substance abuse

Behaviors That Promote Release of Productive Hormones Such As Serotonin and Norepinephrine

- Vigorous physical exercise
- Laughter
- Deep sleep, with active dreaming
- Physical intimacy
- Talking with persons you trust
- Prayer and meditation
- Receiving comforting touches

**Having hope as an agricultural
producer goes a long ways toward
restoring faith in farming and ranching
and charity among farmers and
ranchers.**

**Michael R. Rosmann
March 17, 2005**