FARM STRESS AND MENTAL HEALTH

Minnesota

North Central Regional Needs Assessment Results
2021

North Central Farm and Ranch Stress Assistance Center

REGIONAL NEEDS ASSESSMENT

The objectives of this regional needs assessment were to identify symptoms of depression and anxiety, identify preferred sources and methods of mental health information, and describe participation in USDA programs of agricultural producers in the north central region.

METHODOLOGY

A random sample of agricultural producers in the 12-state north central region were selected to participate in the needs assessment. A self-administered questionnaire and postage-paid return envelope was mailed to 15,000 agricultural producers. A reminder postcard and an additional copy of the survey was mailed four and 10 weeks later, respectively.

Data was entered online by a trained research team. Data analyses were performed using SPSS.

FUNDING

This project was supported by USDA NIFA Award 2020-70028-32728.

Minnesota

RESULTS AND FINDINGS

Results of 74 survey respondents.

AGE

Mean age = 61.56 years (SD = 11.308)
Age range = 32 - 92 years

TYPE OF PRODUCER

Producer Status	N (%)
Full-time Producer	62.2%
Part-time Producer	37.8%

ETHNICITY

Percent Hispanic/Latinx: 0%

RACE

Race	N (%)
White	98.6%
Black/African American	0%
Multiracial	1.4%

HIGHEST LEVEL OF EDUCATION

22.2% of respondents reported a bachelor's degree or higher

MARITAL STATUS

Percent Married: 81.1%
Percent Not Married: 18.9%

GENDER IDENTIFICATION

Gender	N (%)
Male	88.9%
Female	11.1%
Prefer to disclose	0%

SEXUAL ORIENTATION

Percent Heterosexual: 98.6%
Percent Gay, Lesbian, and Bisexual: 1.4%
Prefer not to disclose: 0%

ACTIVE DUTY

16.2%

Percent served in the U.S. Armed Forces, military reserves, etc.

ACCORDING TO THE USDA

AN ESTIMATED 9% OF U.S. FARMERS ARE VETERANS.

FARMING TENURE

Mean years = 38.71 (SD = 13.899)
Range = 8 - 65 years

PRODUCTION PRACTICE

Production	N (%)
Conventional	84.1%
Organic	2.9%
Mixed/both	13.0%

ROLE IN FARMING BUSINESS

Principal or primary owner/operator (primary decision making): 78.4%
Partner owner/operator (shared decision making) or Other: 21.6%

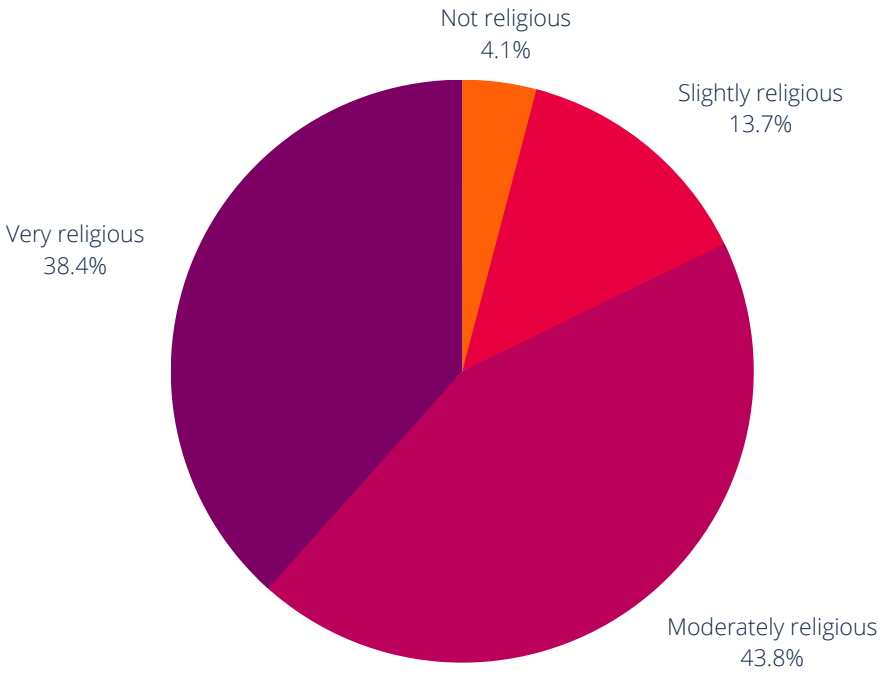
PRIMARY FARM COMMODITIES

Commodity	N (%)
Field Crops	71.0%
Dairy	5.8%
Swine	0%
Beef	17.4%
Sheep	0%
Vegetables	1.4%
Other	4.3%

2021 FARM INCOME

Mean Income = N/A
Income range = N/A

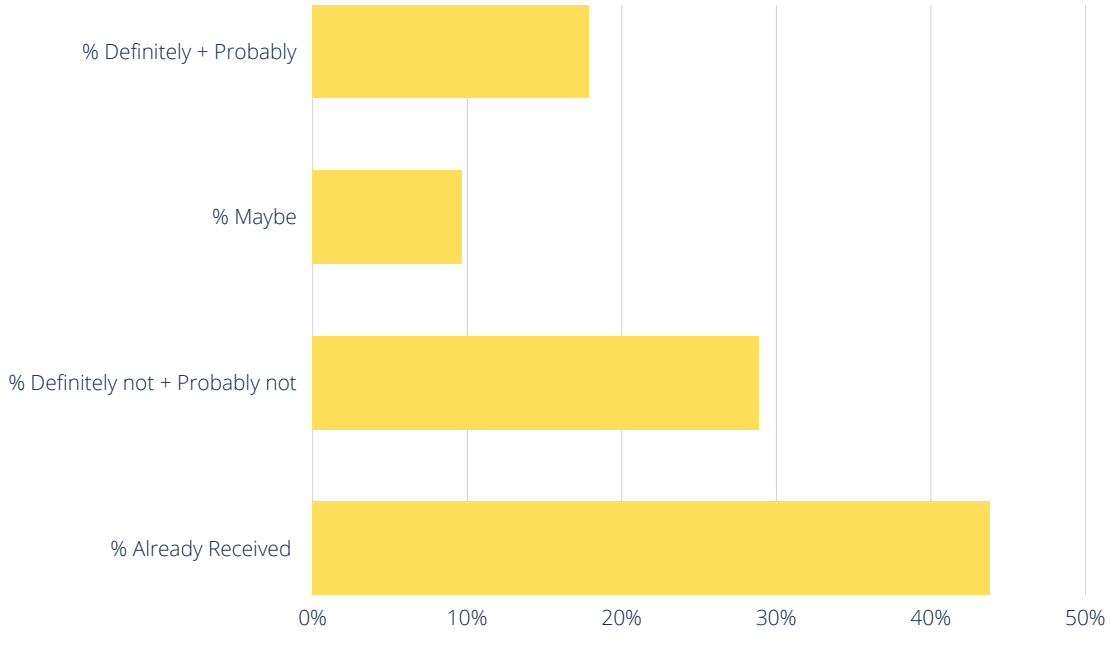
RELIGOUS STATUS



DISABILITY AND IMPAIRMENT

Percent diagnosed with a disability or impairment: 13.9%

COVID-19 VACCINATION STATUS



PREFERRED SOURCES OF MENTAL HEALTH INFORMATION

84.9% of agricultural producers are somewhat/very open to receiving mental health Information

Agricultural producers are most interested in receiving mental health information from the following sources:

- Licensed medical provider (59.7%)
- Licensed mental health provider (53.2%)
- Spouse/Family members (58.1%)
- Religious/Spiritual leaders (53.2%)
- Friends (52.5%)
- Agricultural health and safety specialist (29.7%)
- Mental health organization (41.3%)
- Another farmer, colleague (41.3%)

Agricultural producers are very or somewhat interested in seeking out mental health information from the following sources:

- Licensed medical provider (62.7%)
- Licensed mental health provider (53.3%)
- Spouse/Family member (62.1%)
- Religious/Spiritual leaders (56.9%)
- Friends (44.8%)
- Mental health organization (30.5%)
- Agricultural health and safety specialist (25.4%)
- Another farmer, colleague (42.9%)

PREFERRED CHANNELS OF MENTAL HEALTH INFORMATION

Agricultural producers are somewhat or very interested in receiving mental health information from the following channels:

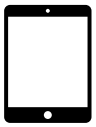
- In Person (54.5%)
- Agricultural News (46.3%)
- Agricultural Website (43.9%)
- Agricultural Radio (42.4%)
- Government Health Website (35.8%)

INTERNET ACCESSIBILITY & USE

87.8% of agricultural producers report in-home internet access.

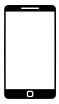
How agricultural producers access internet:

Desktop: 48.6%



Tablet: 27.0%

Laptop: 33.8%



Smartphone: 62.2%

Percent of agricultural producers' with internet speed that can support the following online activities:

- Web-browsing: 70.3%
- Non-live video streaming (Netflix): 58.1%
- Live video watching only (webinars): 39.2%
- Live video watching and communicating (Zoom calls): 51.4%

Percent of agricultural producers' engaging in the following online activities:

- Web-browsing: 67.6%
- Social media: 35.1%
- Email: 77.0%
- Non-live video streaming (Netflix): 43.2%
- Live video watching only (webinars): 29.7%
- Live video watching and communicating (Zoom calls): 28.4%

HEALTH INSURANCE COVERAGE

93.2% of agricultural producers report having health insurance.

50.0% of agricultural producers report having health insurance that covers their mental health needs while 45.3% report that they do not know

Types of health insurance among agricultural producers:

- Private - Employer/Union supplied: 27.0%
- Private- Individually purchased: 25.7%
- Public assisted: 43.2%
- Other: 6.8%

PARTICIPATION IN USDA PROGRAMS

USDA Programs & Services	N (%) Yes	Past 12 months N (%) Yes
USDA Farm Mediation Program	11.1%	4.8%
USDA Crop Insurance Program	62.3%	78.7%
FSA Programs	86.1%	91.8%

HEALTH CONDITIONS AND TREATMENT

Condition	Percent Diagnosed	Percent Receiving Treatment and/or Taking Medication
Asthma	8.6%	33.3%
Anxiety	11.4%	58.3%
Arthritis	21.1%	22.2%
Cancer (any type)	14.3%	41.7%
Chronic pain	17.1%	50.0%
COPD	4.2%	28.6%
Dementia and/or Alzheimers	0%	0%
Depression	17.1%	56.3%
Diabetes	4.3%	37.5%
Hearing loss	33.8%	43.5%
Heart condition	15.2%	50.0%
High blood pressure	35.2%	88.0%
High cholesterol	12.0%	81.0%
Obesity	4.3%	20.0%

MENTAL HEALTH

40.0% of agricultural producers experience at least one symptom of anxiety and depression.

4.2% meet the criteria for Generalized Anxiety Disorder (GAD).
7.1% meet the criteria for Depression

Problems	Not at all	Several Days	More than half the days	Every-day
Feeling nervous, anxious or on edge	66.7%	29.2%	2.8%	1.4%
Not being able to stop or control worrying	81.9%	13.9%	2.8%	1.4%
Little interest or pleasure in doing things	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Feeling down, depressed, or hopeless	80.0%	15.7%	2.9%	1.4%

OPIOID USE

6.9% of agricultural producers have taken an opioid pain reliever In the past month

Of those producers N/A reported having prescriptions while N/A reported using without a prescription.

OPIOID USE

Using Opioids as Prescribed	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Always
Producer Prescribed Use Frequency	0%	40%	0%	60%

ALCOHOL USE

Survey respondents were asked 10 questions about their alcohol intake, potential dependence on alcohol, and experience of alcohol-related harm. Based on responses, men and women were assigned to an alcohol use risk category.

Risk Category	Men (%)	Women (%)
Low risk (low risk of health problems related to alcohol use)	71.4	100
Risky (increased risk of health problems related to alcohol use)	22.4	0
Harmful (increased risk of health problems related to alcohol use and a possible mild or moderate alcohol use disorder)	4.1	0
Severe (increased risk of health problems related to alcohol use and a possible moderate or severe alcohol use disorder)	2.0	0

TOBACCO USE

Tobacco & Nicotine	Ever Used	Used within the past 12 months	Used every day in the past 12 months
Cigarettes	29.6%	3.4%	N/A
E-cigarettes	2.9%	8.3%	N/A
Cigars	7.5%	7.1%	N/A
Smokeless tobacco	19.7%	N/A	18.2%
Pipe tobacco	2.9%	N/A	9.1%

BARRIERS TO PROFESSIONAL CARE

Barriers that stop, delay, or discourage professional care	Not at all	A little	Quite a bit	A lot
Being unsure where to go to get professional care	57 (83.3%)	11 (16.2%)	-	-
Wanting to solve the problem on my own	41 (61.2%)	11 (16.4%)	10 (14.9%)	5 (7.5%)
Concern that I might be seen as weak for having a mental health problem	51 (77.3%)	8 (12.1%)	7 (10.6%)	-
Fear of being put in hospital against my will	59 (89.4%)	5 (7.6%)	1 (1.5%)	1 (1.5%)
Concern that it might harm my chances when applying for jobs	53 (94.6%)	2 (3.6%)	-	1 (1.8%)
Problems with transport or travelling to appointments	66 (97.1%)	-	1 (1.5%)	1 (1.5%)
Thinking the problem would get better by itself	48 (71.9%)	14 (20.9%)	4 (6.0%)	1 (1.5%)
Concern about what my family might think, say, do or feel	52 (78.8%)	12 (18.2%)	2 (3.0%)	-
Feeling embarrassed or ashamed	53 (79.1%)	10 (14.9%)	3 (4.5%)	1 (1.5%)
Preferring to get alternative forms of care (e.g. traditional/religious healing or alternative/complementary therapies)	56 (84.8%)	5 (7.6%)	3 (4.5%)	2 (3.0%)
Not being able to afford the financial costs involved	55 (82.1%)	7 (10.4%)	3 (4.5%)	2 (3.0%)
Concern that I might be seen as ‘crazy’	59 (88.1%)	8 (11.9%)	-	-
Thinking that professional care probably would not help	51 (77.3%)	12 (18.2%)	1 (1.5%)	2 (3.0%)
Concern that I might be seen as a bad parent	48 (92.3%)	4 (7.7%)	-	-

PROFESSIONAL CARE BARRIERS

Barriers that stop, delay, or discourage	Not at all	A little	Quite a bit	A lot
Professionals from my own ethnic or cultural group not being available	62 (96.9%)	1 (1.6%)	-	1 (1.6%)
Being too unwell to ask for help	61 (93.8%)	2 (3.1%)	-	2 (3.1%)
Concern that people I know might find out	55 (82.1%)	12 (17.9%)	-	-
Dislike of talking about my feelings, emotions or thoughts	43 (66.2%)	11 (16.9%)	11 (16.9%)	-
Concern that people might not take me seriously if they found out I was having professional care	52 (80.0%)	12 (18.5%)	1 (1.5%)	-
Concerns about the treatments available (e.g. medication side effects)	52 (78.8%)	13 (19.7%)	-	1 (1.5%)
Not wanting a mental health problem to be on my medical records	55 (82.1%)	8 (11.9%)	3 (4.5%)	1 (1.5%)
Having had previous bad experiences with professional care for mental health	62 (92.5%)	4 (6.0%)	-	1 (1.5%)
Preferring to get help from family or friends	49 (75.4%)	12 (18.5%)	3 (4.6%)	1 (1.5%)
Concern that my children may be taken into care or that I may lose access or custody without my agreement	54 (94.7%)	2 (3.5%)	-	1 (1.8%)
Thinking I did not have a problem	55 (83.3%)	7 (10.6%)	2 (3.0%)	2 (3.0%)
Concern about what my friends might think, say or do	51 (78.5%)	13 (20.0%)	-	1 (1.5%)
Difficulty taking time off work	41 (80.4%)	7 (13.7%)	2 (3.9%)	1 (2.0%)
Concern about what people at work might think, say or do	41 (87.2%)	4 (8.5%)	1 (2.1%)	1 (2.1%)
Having problems with childcare while I receive professional care	42 (95.5%)	1 (2.3%)	-	1 (2.3%)
Having no one who could help me get professional care	59 (92.2%)	3 (4.7%)	-	2 (3.1%)

ABOUT THE CENTER

The North Central Farm and Ranch Stress Assistance Center is a regional stress assistance center funded by USDA. The Center expands and delivers farm and ranch stress and mental health resources and services in 12 states.

CENTER COLLABORATORS

- University of Illinois Extension
- Iowa State Extension
- Kansas State University Extension
- Michigan State University Extension
- University of Minnesota Extension
- University of Missouri Extension
- University of Nebraska Extension
- North Dakota State University Extension
- Ohio State University Extension
- Purdue University Extension
- South Dakota State University Extension
- University of Wisconsin Extension
- Central States Center for Agricultural Safety and Health
- Progressive Agriculture Foundation
- National AgrAbility

CONTACT

For more information about the North Central Farm and Ranch Stress Assistance Center, contact Josie Rudolphi (josier@illinois.edu) or Courtney Cuthbertson (cuthbert@illinois.edu) or visit www.farmstress.org.