**Let's Talk About Stress!**

When building the blueprint for the We Talk. We Grow. mental health campaign, common farm stresses were identified such as finances, family disagreements, administrative burdens, long hours, heavy work load, lack of sleep, weather, working in a high hazard industry, working with livestock, lack of insurance, home is work/work is home, and stigma. These stressors can cause the feeling of being out of control.

Some farmers have learned to effectively deal with the high levels of stress through various coping mechanisms and have learned to become resilient in such challenging times. Other farmers have yet to discover that it is stress causing some of the signs and symptoms that they are experiencing such as upset stomach, headaches, tension, fatigue or insomnia, change in eating habits, relationship difficulties, depression, anxiety, withdrawal and perhaps substance use. Depending on your current health and fitness level, the signs and symptoms may vary.

# There are ways to take back the control to reduce the stress and become a more resilient farmer.

**Planning:**

**Attitude:**

**Action:**

# Over the spring and summer months of 2020, Dr Bill Howatt from Howatt HR gave us several lessons on microskills that may help with maintaining mental fitness during the COVID-19 pandemic. These microskills would be a good fit to help with on farm stresses too. Visit the [Tactics for Maintaining Mental Fitness during the COVID-19 Pandemic](https://farmsafetyns.ca/covid-19/maintaining-mental-fitness/) page on the Farm Safety Nova Scotia website to discover microskills that may work for you such as having an attitude of gratitude, feeling overwhelmed, prioritizing sleep, progressive relaxation, flipping the switch, understanding stress and many more.

**Let's Talk About Stress! – DISCUSSION RECORD**

**Agenda:**

* Discuss the common stressors that can occur on the farm? Were any of those listed above?
* Share how you mange the stressors?
* Share resources such as the Farm Family Support Center to access help? 1.844.880.9142

Comments or safety concerns as a result of the discussion or observed since the last rally?

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Follow-up to concerns raised at previous rally?
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Action Items?
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Near Miss/Incidents/Unsafe Acts/Conditions to Report?

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Topics recommended for future Rallies: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Thank the rally members for their participation.**

**Quiz Answers:** 1. T, 2. T, 3. e, 4. T, 5. T

**TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE**

1. Some farmers have learned to effectively deal with the high levels of stress through various coping mechanisms and have learned to become resilient in such challenging times.  True or False

# 2. There are ways to take back the control to reduce the stress and become a more resilient farmer.

True or False

3. Microskills that may help cope with stress include:

1. Attitude of Gratitude
2. Feeling overwhelmed.
3. Prioritizing sleep.
4. Understanding stress.
5. All of the Above

4. Techniques that may a worker relax and cope with stress may include exercise, rest breaks and deep breaths. True or False

5. Common farm stresses identified are finances, long hours, heavy work load, lack of sleep, weather, and home is work/work is home. True or False

**Attendance RECORD**

\*This is to acknowledge that I understand and agree to actively participate in the safety meeting.

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