



# ***WELLNESS IN TOUGH TIMES***

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- *Geographic Size:* 77,348 Square Miles
- *Population:* 1,934,408
  - Race: 88.1% Caucasian
  - Persons 65 & Older: 16.2%
- *Industry:* 1 in 4 jobs in Nebraska are related to agriculture
- *Net farm income:* Declined 23% or over \$800 million since 2008



In Nebraska, cattle outnumber people by more than three to one.

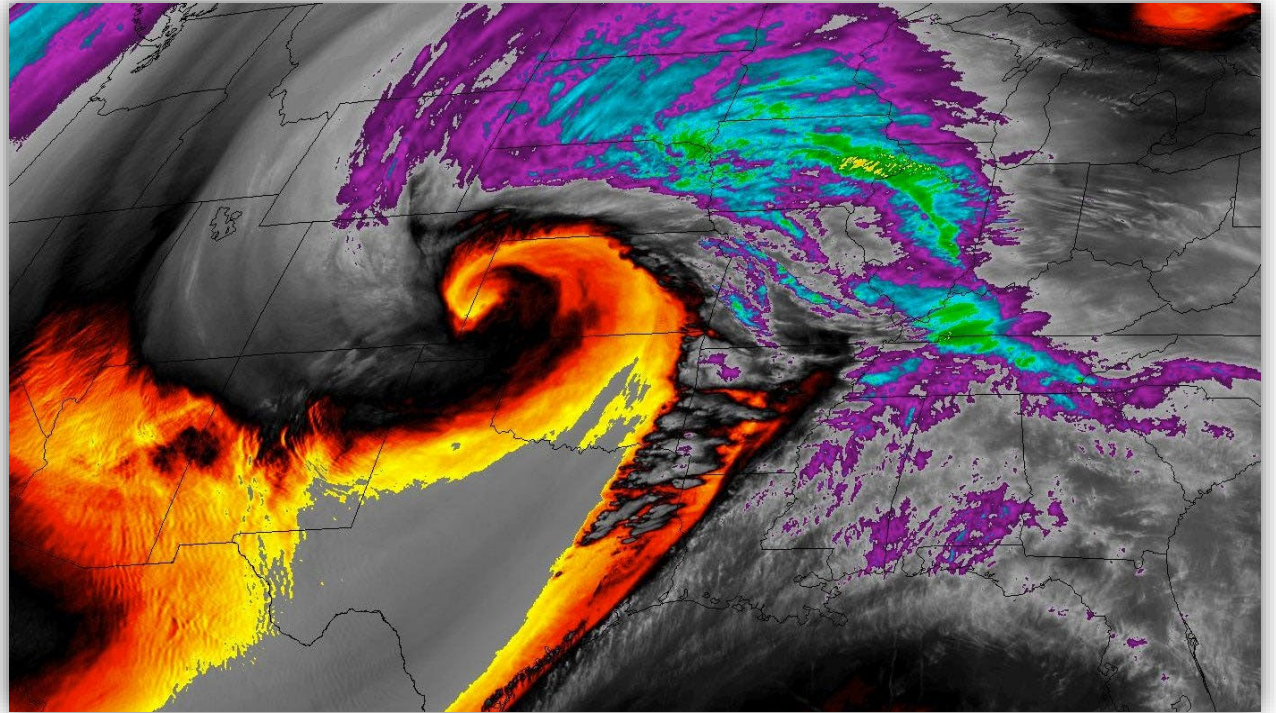




### **Winter Storm Ulmer – Began March 13-14, 2019**

- Bombogenesis - "bomb cyclone"
- Nearly the entire state impacted by a blizzard, straight line winds and/or record flooding

Nebraska Flooding: March 2019. Nebraska Department of Natural Resources Story Map  
**Website:** <https://go.unl.edu/storm-ulmer>





Tri-State Livestock News - 2019



Nebraska Emergency Management Agency - 2019





Omaha World Herald - 2019



## Winter Storm Ulmer

- Storm Onset – March 13, 2019
- 84 of Nebraska's 93 counties, five tribal nations, and 104 cities received State or Federal Disaster Declarations
- Urban and rural Nebraskans impacted.
- Rural communities, farms, and ranches isolated by flood waters and damaged infrastructure.
- Estimated \$1.2 billion damage
- Over \$400 million in damage to Infrastructure.
- Estimated \$840 million in cattle and crop losses.
- Offutt Air Force Base in Omaha had \$1 billion damage (not included in the statewide damage estimate).

**Recovery is expected to take nine years.**









**EXTENSION**

**Rural Family Stress & Wellness**

## **Rural Family Stress and Wellness Workgroup**

- Multi-organizational group of professionals
- *Members include representatives from* Extension, Bryan Health, Health Department, University of Nebraska – Lincoln (UNL) Public Policy, Behavioral Health Education Center, University of Nebraska – Kearney, University of Nebraska Medical Center, AgriSafe, UNL College of Education and Human Sciences, Nebraska Children and Families Foundation, Nebraska AgrAbility, Central States Center for Ag Safety and Health

# eXtension Impact Collaborative

Atlanta, Georgia April, 2019







**EXTENSION**

## **Wellness in Tough Times**

The Wellness in Tough Times project focuses on rural Nebraska communities impacted by disaster(s) with limited resources for recovery. The project strives to empower and strengthen the resiliency of individuals and families in communities by promoting opportunities to start the conversation around mental health and wellness.



**EXTENSION**

**Wellness in Tough Times**

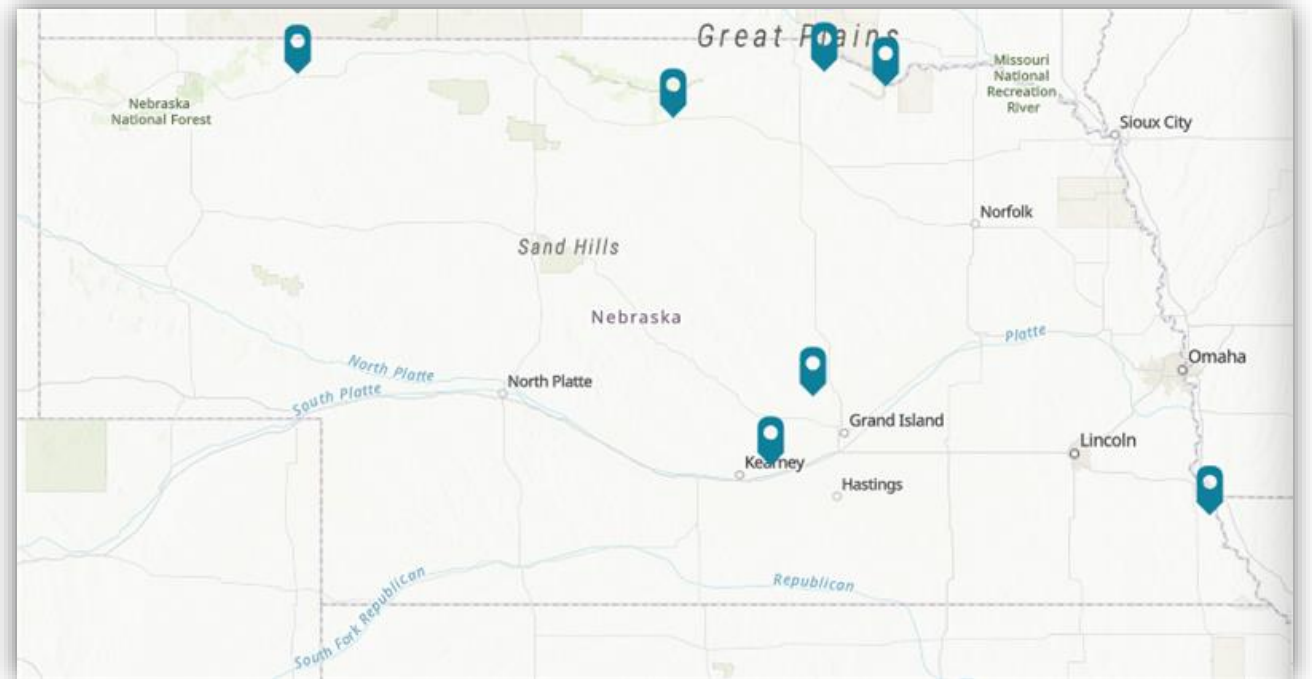
## **Goals of the Wellness In Tough Times Project**

- Increased mental health awareness
- Decreased behavioral health stigma
- Increased use and/or awareness of behavioral health support resources.



### Wellness in Tough Times Project Communities 2019-2021

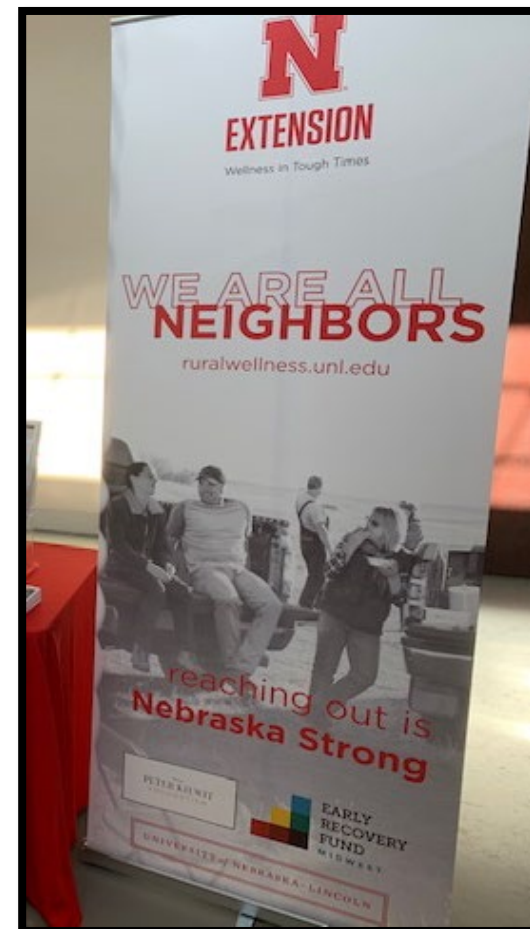
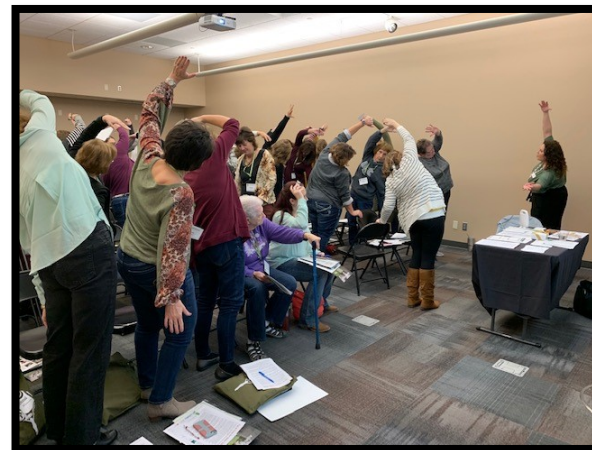
- *Criteria:* Impacted by the 2019 disasters with limited resources for recovery
- 7,000+ households





## Wellness in Tough Times

*Funding, Media, & Resources*



Funding offered to date: **\$260,500**

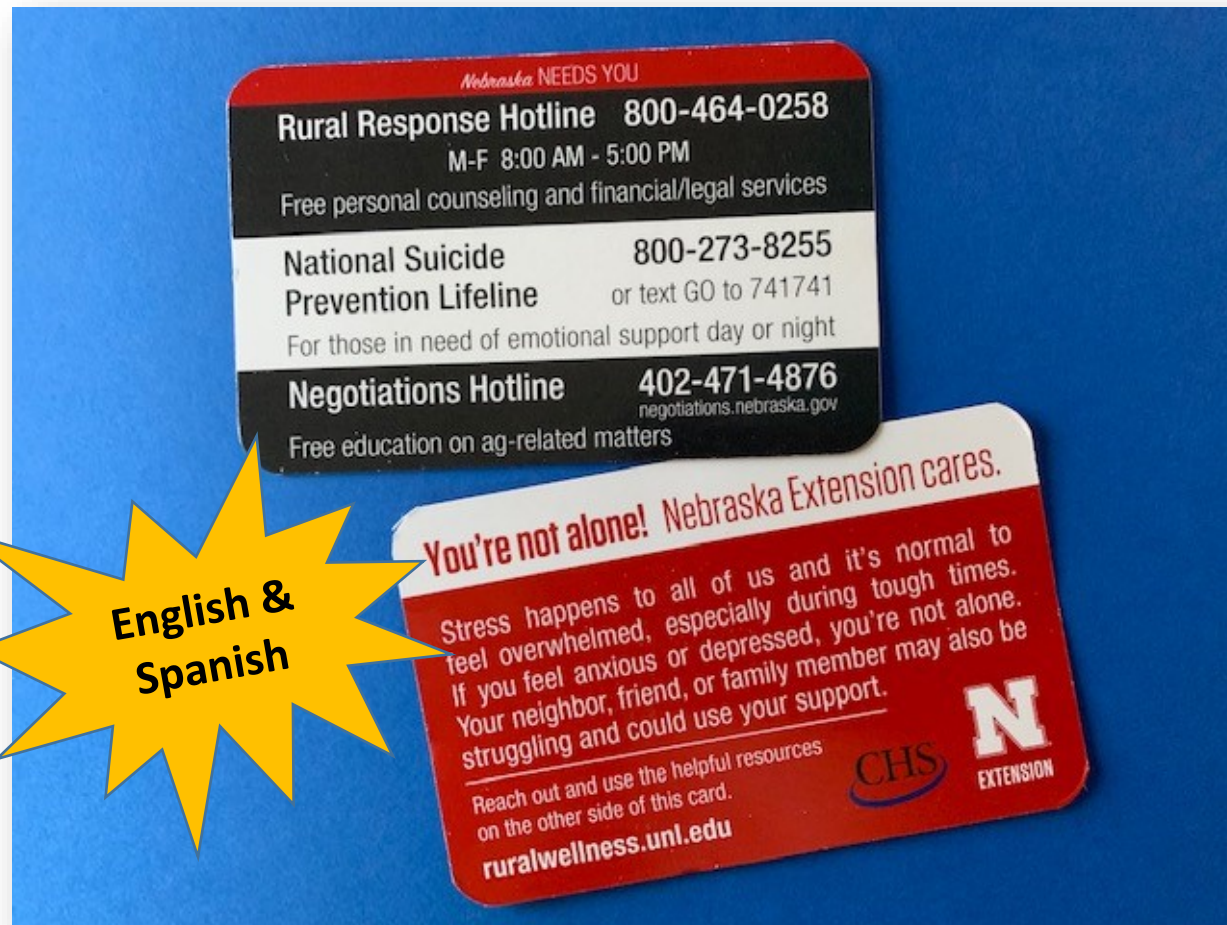


## **Media & Awareness Campaigns**

**Target Audience: Rural Residents**

- ☐ Disaster-related PSA messages for radio
- ☐ Disaster-related social media
- ☐ Disaster-related print and online articles
- ☐ Rural youth social media
- ☐ Radio and podcasts interviews
- ☐ Television interviews for local channels, Market Journal, and RFD
- ☐ Direct mail resource booklets – summer and fall
- ☐ New web site featuring videos and resources

# Resource List and Wallet Card Campaign



## Staying Connected During Tough Times

RESOURCES FOR NEBRASKA FARMERS, RANCHERS, AND THEIR FAMILIES

We hope you reach out if you are feeling stressed.

- Rural Response Hotline:** The hotline offers access to many attorneys, financial advisors, professional counselors, mediators, clergy, and others. **800-464-0258**  
 There are 167 behavioral health professionals working with the Rural Response Hotline. Ask about no-cost vouchers for counseling services. **M-F 8:00 AM - 5:00 PM**
- National Suicide Prevention Lifeline:** A national network of local crisis centers that provides free and confidential emotional support to people in suicidal crisis or emotional distress 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. **800-273-8255**  
**Crisis Text Line:** Free, 24/7 support for those in crisis, connecting people in crisis to trained Crisis Counselors. **text GO to 741741**
- Veterans Crisis Line:** Connect with this resource to reach caring, qualified responders within the Department of Veterans Affairs. Many of them are Veterans themselves. **800-273-8255, Press 1 or text to 838255**
- Negotiations Program:** Mediation services for agricultural borrowers, creditors, and USDA program participants. Free one-on-one education on agricultural financial and legal matters. **402-471-4876**
- The Boys Town National Hotline:** Not just for boys. For all teens and their parents, this hotline is available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, with specially trained counselors. A TDD line is available (1-800-448-1833), allowing counselors to communicate with speech-impaired and deaf callers. **800-448-3000**
- SAMHSA National Helpline:** Free, confidential, 24/7, 365-day-a-year treatment referral in English and Spanish for individuals and families experiencing issues with alcohol, prescription drug, or other substance abuse. **800-662-HELP (4357)**
- Nebraska LOSS (Local Outreach to Suicide Survivors) Teams:** Trained professionals acting as volunteers, bringing immediate support to those who have lost a loved one to a completed suicide. Visit [NEloss.team.nebraska.edu](http://NEloss.team.nebraska.edu) for a map with phone numbers of LOSS teams across the state.

**YOU ARE NOT ALONE. We care about you!**

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# ruralwellness.unl.edu



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**RURAL WELLNESS**



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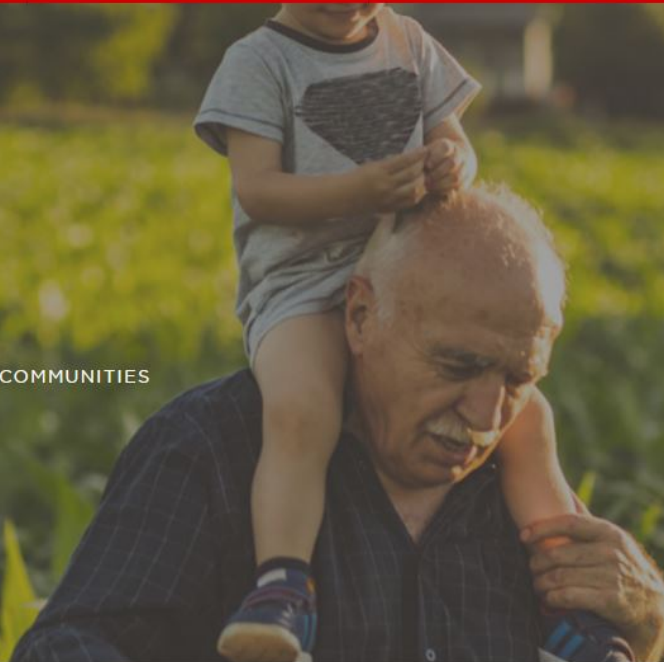
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## RURAL WELLNESS

IMPROVED WELLNESS AND REDUCED STRESS IN RURAL NEBRASKAN COMMUNITIES



[EMAIL US](#)

## Workshop: Communicating With Farmers Under Stress

### This Workshop Benefits:

Agricultural professionals, including bank lenders, ag suppliers, educators and consultants who work with farmers and ranchers.

Join us for a FREE online webinar:

Wednesday, July 15, 2020  
11:00 AM to 12:30 PM CDT

Register at:

[go.unl.edu/stress2020](https://go.unl.edu/stress2020)

For more information contact:

Nebraska Extension  
Educators,

Glennis McClure at  
[gmcclure3@unl.edu](mailto:gmcclure3@unl.edu)  
or

Susan Harris at  
[susan.harris@unl.edu](mailto:susan.harris@unl.edu)



### PURPOSE

Numerous factors may cause stress for farmers. Many farmers face financial problems, marketing uncertainties, farm transfer issues, production challenges, and more.

You may know farmers and ranchers who struggle with stress, anxiety, depression, burnout, indecision or suicidal thoughts. Maybe you find yourself having to deliver difficult news to them. This workshop will help you recognize and respond when you suspect a farmer, rancher, or rural family member might need help.

### OBJECTIVES

- \* Build awareness around potentially stressful conditions affecting some farmers and ranchers.
- \* Learn stress triggers, identify signs of stress, and review helpful techniques for responding.
- \* Learn techniques for identifying, approaching and working with farmers who may not cope with stress effectively.
- \* Learn where to go for additional help.

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START THE  
CONVERSATION



**WELLNESS**  
IN  
**TOUGH TIMES**



## START THE CONVERSATION



**N** Wellness in  
Tough Times  
EXTENSION [ruralwellness.unl.edu](http://ruralwellness.unl.edu)

**Are you feeling stressed, anxious, angry or overwhelmed?  
You are not alone.**

It is important to stay connected during tough times. Reaching out is what makes us Nebraska Strong.

The Wellness in Tough Times grant project focuses on providing stress-reducing resources and support to rural Nebraskans. The project is supported by Nebraska Extension, Midwest Early Recovery Fund and the Peter Kiewit Foundation. If you received this mailing, your community is part of this project.

We are here to support you during this challenging time.

**Let's start the conversation!**

### OUR SPONSORS



PETER KIEWIT  
FOUNDATION

## LET'S CHAT!



When times are tough, it helps to talk about it and bring out your resourcefulness. Join our Wellness in Tough Times Chat Café — anonymous group phone conversations that offer a safe time to share what's on your mind and connect with other Nebraskans who are facing similar challenges. Therapists from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln's Department of Child, Youth and Family Studies will be on the line to help callers work through issues connected to natural disaster recovery and gain skills to improve lives.

**You may ask questions or just listen.  
Everyone is welcome!**



### Mark your calendars to join our Wellness in Tough Times Chat Café for the following discussion topics:

Coping After a Disaster .....	Oct. 15   12 - 1 p.m. CDT
Self-Care 101 .....	Oct. 22   12 - 1 p.m. CDT
Coping During a Pandemic .....	Oct. 29   12 - 1 p.m. CDT
Finances: A Balancing Act .....	Nov. 05   12 - 1 p.m. CST
Successfully Resolving Conflict .....	Nov. 12   12 - 1 p.m. CST
Raising Healthy Children .....	Nov. 19   12 - 1 p.m. CST
Strengthening Your Couple Relationship .....	Dec. 03   12 - 1 p.m. CST
The Scope of Grandparenting Today .....	Dec. 10   12 - 1 p.m. CST

**TO JOIN, CALL 346-248-7799**

▶ Follow the prompts and enter Meeting ID 979 232 622 598

# Neighbor Neighbor

IN TIMES OF DISTRESS WE STAND TOGETHER  
◀◀ AND HELP OUR NEIGHBORS ▶▶

## KNOW THE SIGNS ▶▶

Learning the warning signs of suicide could save someone's life. While an individual may not be experiencing all of these warning signs, most will experience more than one and for an extended period of time. Some are obvious while some are more subtle, so it's important to know what to look for and what to do next if you do notice these behaviors in someone you care about. With each of these warning signs, watch for a change from the individual's typical behavior.

- ▶▶ Withdrawal
- ▶▶ Giving away possessions
- ▶▶ Acting anxious or agitated
- ▶▶ Unexplainable physical pain
- ▶▶ Talking about being a burden
- ▶▶ Displaying extreme mood swings
- ▶▶ Excessive drinking or substance use
- ▶▶ Feeling trapped or in unbearable pain
- ▶▶ Saying goodbye
- ▶▶ Feeling hopeless
- ▶▶ Changes in sleep
- ▶▶ Increase in anger or rage
- ▶▶ Risky or reckless behavior
- ▶▶ Talking or writing about wanting to die
- ▶▶ Looking for a way to kill themselves

## GET HELP NOW ▶▶

*If you are feeling suicidal or if you are concerned about an individual who is suicidal, there is immediate help available. A skilled, trained counselor at a crisis center is able to talk to you now and provide assistance.*

**Suicide Prevention Lifeline:** 1-800-273-TALK (8255)

or text HELLO to 741741

**Nebraska Family Helpline:** 888-866-8660

**Rural Response Hotline:** 800-464-0258

## RISK FACTORS ▶▶

**Definition:** Things that have occurred or exist in someone's life that increase their chances of suicide. Please note, someone who has experienced one or more of these may never think of suicide, but risk increases the more factors that exist.

- ▶▶ Death or other trauma in the family
- ▶▶ Persistent serious family conflict
- ▶▶ History of physical or sexual abuse, trauma, violence, or pain
- ▶▶ Personal loss - death, divorce, separation
- ▶▶ Traumatic break-ups of romantic relationships
- ▶▶ Job problems, unemployment, financial loss
- ▶▶ Legal/criminal issues
- ▶▶ School failures & other major disappointments
- ▶▶ Bullying, harassment, or victimization by peers
- ▶▶ Struggling with gender identity or sexual orientation without adequate support
- ▶▶ Family history of alcoholism
- ▶▶ Past suicidal behavior and attempts
- ▶▶ Access to firearms

## HOW TO HELP ▶▶

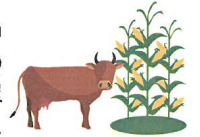
- ▶▶ Know the warning signs.
- ▶▶ **ACT** - **A**cknowledge, **C**are, **T**ell
- ▶▶ Never leave someone who is suicidal alone.
- ▶▶ Take any and all comments about suicide very seriously.
- ▶▶ Never keep thoughts or comments about suicide a secret.
- ▶▶ Be direct, and not afraid to ask the question, "Are you thinking about suicide?"

## CHANGE THE STATS ▶▶



Suicide rates in agriculture are higher than for any other occupation.

Access to mental health services remain limited to farmers because of the rural nature of their occupations.



Approximately 1 in 5 adults experiences mental illness in a given year.

## HOW TO START THE CONVERSATION ▶▶

Have suicide prevention resources in hand when starting the conversation. Be specific. Tell them exactly why you're concerned about them.

- ▶▶ "I've noticed you stopped coming to \_\_\_\_\_ and you've lost interest in things you once enjoyed. I'm concerned about you. What's going on?"
- ▶▶ "You seem down lately. How have things been going at \_\_\_\_\_?"
- ▶▶ "Tell me more about how you're feeling."

**Validate their feelings and provide them with support and resources:**

- ▶▶ "You're not alone. We will get through this together."
- ▶▶ It's ok to say, "I want you to live."



# Husker Harvest Days 2019





## **Wellness in Tough Times**

### *Community Needs Assessment*

- **Mental and Physical Health-Related Quality of Life Community Readiness Assessment\***
  - Interviewed 18 people from five communities (March to August, 2020) of which 14 people completed a 31 questionnaire survey.

#### *Demographics:*

- Gender: 13 females and 5 males
- Age: range 25-64
- 46% lived in the community 16 + years
- Occupations: education, health care, business, government, non-profit

Schmader, B., 2020. Healthy Lifestyles Community Readiness Assessment: Co-Creating Initiatives with Communities and Examining Differences in Sectors and Demographic Characteristics across Dimensions. Undergraduate Honors Thesis. University of Nebraska-Lincoln. <https://digitalcommons.unl.edu/honorstheses/214/>





## Wellness in Tough Times

### *Assessment: Survey Results*

#### Results:

- Are community leaders willing to address mental and physical health related quality of life issues?
  - **77% responded either moderately or greatly**
- Are community leaders willing to look outside of this community for new ideas and new ways of doing thing?
  - **84% responded moderately or greatly**
- Do people in your organization see mental and physical health-related quality of life an issue?
  - **69% responded moderately**
- Is the entire community aware of mental and physical health-related quality of life as a public health issue?
  - **50% responded slightly**

### Interview Themes

- Disaster
  - Flood
  - COVID-19
- Community Culture
- Community Participation
- Community Events
- Leadership
- Community Issues
- Resources



Lynch, Nebraska  
Photo Credit: Lynch  
Volunteer Fire Department





**EXTENSION**

**Wellness in Tough Times**  
*Next Steps*

## **Program Evaluation**

- 1) Increased mental health awareness.
- 2) Decreased behavioral health stigma.
- 3) Increased use and/or awareness of behavioral health support resources.



## Wellness in Tough Times

### *Next Steps*

### Next Steps:

- Outreach activities for youth and adults
- Mental health & wellness professional development
- Engage communities in conversations to identify their Wellness in Tough Times project(s).

### eXtension support:

- The Wellness in Tough Times Toolkit is identified as a New Technologies for Agricultural Extension (NTAE) Project.
- Wrap-around services support development of a Wellness in Tough Times eFieldGuide and Community Toolkit.



**N** EXTENSION

**Wellness in Tough Times**

**Questions?**

START THE  
**CONVERSATION**





**EXTENSION**

## **Wellness in Tough Times**

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