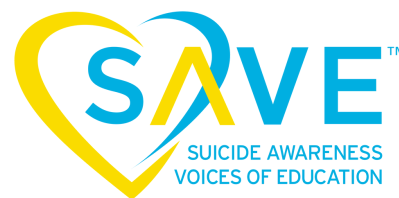


UNDERSTANDING AND PREVENTING SUICIDE IN RURAL COMMUNITIES



SUPPORTING EACH OTHER IN FARMING AND AGRICULTURE

Life in farming and rural communities can be deeply rewarding — but also isolating and stressful. Long hours, unpredictable weather, financial pressures, and limited access to care can take a toll on mental health. Knowing the warning signs, risk factors, and ways to help can save lives.

WHY RURAL COMMUNITIES ARE AT HIGHER RISK

- **Isolation**- Geographic distance and fewer social outlets can increase loneliness.
- **Access to Firearms**- Guns are common tools on farms but also the most lethal means of suicide.
- **Stigma**- Talking about mental health can still be seen as a sign of weakness in some communities.
- **Limited Services**- Fewer mental health professionals and long distances to care make it harder to get help.
- **Economic/Weather**- Financial strain, market fluctuations, or crop loss can lead to hopelessness.

COMMON RISK FACTORS – WHAT INCREASES RISK

- Untreated depression or anxiety
- Chronic pain or injury
- Alcohol or substance misuse
- Relationship or family conflict
- Financial or legal trouble
- Recent loss or trauma
- Easy access to lethal means

PROTECTIVE FACTORS – WHAT HELPS PEOPLE STAY SAFE

- Strong connection with family, friends, or faith
- Supportive relationships with community members
- Access to confidential mental health crisis support
- Safe storage of firearms and medications
- Sense of purpose, belonging, or hope
- Willingness to ask for and accept help

FIND SUPPORT

DIAL 911 FOR MEDICAL EMERGENCIES

If bodily harm or threat of harm call 911 or go to the nearest emergency room.

988 SUICIDE AND CRISIS LIFELINE

The most comprehensive source of information about local resources and services in the country

Call or text 988 | 988lifeline.org

SAMHSA TREATMENT LOCATOR

Confidential and anonymous resource for people seeking treatment for mental and substance use disorders in the US and its territories

Call 1-833-888-1553 | findtreatment.gov

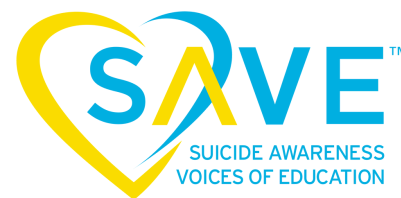
FARM AID HOTLINE

It serves as a lifeline for farmers needing immediate help and connects them to a network of resources and support organizations.

Call 1-800-FARM-AID (1-800-327-6243) | farmaid.org



UNDERSTANDING AND PREVENTING SUICIDE IN RURAL COMMUNITIES



PREVENTING SUICIDE- WHAT YOU CAN DO

You can help prevent suicide even if you're not a mental health professional. Every person has the power to make a difference. By learning the warning signs, reaching out to someone who may be struggling, safely storing firearms and medications, and helping connect friends or neighbors to support, you can play a vital role in saving lives.

THE WARNING SIGNS OF SUICIDE

WHAT THEY MIGHT TALK ABOUT

- Wanting to die
- Feeling hopeless or helpless
- Having no purpose /reason to live
- Feeling trapped/in unbearable pain
- Being a burden to others
- Suicide

WHAT THEY MIGHT DO

- Look for a way to end their life
- Increase the use of alcohol or drugs
- Changes in sleep (sleeping too little or too much)
- Give away possessions
- Withdraw from activities

HOW THEIR BEHAVIOR MAY CHANGE

- Extreme mood swings
- Uncontrolled anger or talking about seeking revenge
- Anxiety or agitation
- Reckless behavior

HOW YOU CAN SUPPORT A FRIEND OR NEIGHBOR

- **Check in-** A simple "How are you holding up?" can open the door.
- **Listen without judgment-** Let them talk — you don't have to have all the answers.
- **Be direct-** It's okay to ask, "Are you thinking about suicide?" Asking does not increase risk.
- **Stay connected-** Isolation worsens distress. Keep showing up — call, visit, invite them for coffee.
- **Encourage professional help-** Offer to help find a counselor, doctor, or clergy member, or call a helpline together.



LETHAL MEANS SAFETY: REDUCING ACCESS TO HIGHLY LETHAL METHODS DURING TIMES OF CRISIS CAN SAVE LIVES.

You don't have to take away someone's means permanently — just create time and distance when risk is high.

- **Firearms-** Store guns unloaded and locked, with ammunition kept separately. Consider temporary off-site storage if someone in the household is struggling.
- **Medications/chemicals-** Keep securely stored and dispose of unused or expired products safely.

