

U.S. Ag Centers Mental Health Awareness Campaign: Promotional Toolkit

May 2019



#MentalHealthAwareness #USAgCenters #WhyCare #GreenRibbon #CureStigma



Are you interested in getting weekly reminders in May for updating your social media message content?

Go to <https://gpcah.public-health.uiowa.edu/mental-health/> or contact Jenna Gibbs at jenna-gibbs@uiowa.edu to sign up for weekly reminders during the campaign.

Mental Health Awareness Campaign focuses on agricultural workers

Purpose of this campaign

In response to a growing concerns about the lack of resources and support for farmers, farm workers and families who are facing difficult economic conditions and higher rates of suicide in rural and agricultural communities, the U.S. Agricultural Safety and Health Centers are actively participating in Mental Health Awareness month (May 2019). According to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and prevention, suicide remains a significant public health concern and is among the top ten causes of death nationwide. Farmers have been identified as a high-risk population, with suicide rates consistently above those of the general population. Farm work includes many factors that are also related to suicide risk, including economic volatility, social isolation, and managing chronic pain. Stigma and privacy concerns in the agricultural community are associated with mental health issues.

In previous years, messages dealing with suicide prevention and mental health awareness have not particularly targeted rural, agricultural communities. The five week campaign starts on April 29, 2019 and ends on June 2, 2019. We have gathered several resources from the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI), Suicide Prevention Resource Center, American Farm Bureau Federation, the U.S. Ag Centers, and others. We encourage you and your organization to tailor the kit to your needs, promote your own resources, and include more local or state-specific resources.

Weekly themes

- ✓ **Science of Stress and Suicide Risk** – Week 1 (April 29 – May 5)
- ✓ **Referral Resources** – Week 2 (May 6 – May 12)
- ✓ **Coping with Substance Abuse/Opioids** – Week 3 (May 13 – May 19)
- ✓ **Cultivating Resiliency** – Week 4 (May 20 – May 26)
- ✓ **Stop the Stigma** – Week 4 (May 20 – May 26)

Participation ideas

- ✓ To show your support, update your organization's website and Facebook cover photo with the suggested Green Ribbon Graphic on page 3. Facebook Profile pics can be adjusted with Green Ribbon in the bottom corner. Link: [/bit.ly/2K1DJSC](https://bit.ly/2K1DJSC)
- ✓ Throughout the month of May, post the social media messages found on the following pages, or create your own posts using the hashtags #MentalHealthAwareness #USAgCenters #WhyCare #GreenRibbon #CureStigma. Remember to tag individual organizations on posts if relevant.
- ✓ Participate in the *free* webinar on May 10th at 12:00pm CDT. Details on page 6.
- ✓ Get involved in the conversation. Follow, retweet and share mental health awareness messages on Twitter and Facebook. Aim to share or post one message every other day.
- ✓ Contact media outlets to have PSAs run on the local radio, help circulate a press release, or partner with a spokesperson write an Op-ed.
- ✓ Share resources this month! There are plenty of links provided in the social media kit.

Mental Health Awareness Month Graphic

Consider using one of the below graphics as your organizational Facebook cover photo during the month of May.



Customizable News Release –

May is *Mental Health Month*: Join the U.S. Ag Safety and Health Centers' effort to promote resources for farmers and rural communities

[CITY, STATE, Date] – Accessing mental health resources and support is challenging for American farmers and their families who increasingly face financial hardship, weather changes, chronic pain, suicidal thoughts, and other unrelenting difficulties. This year, the 11 U.S. Agricultural Safety and Health Centers are teaming up to promote resources for farmers during a five-week Mental Health Awareness campaign that focuses on a different topic each week.

“Motivated by suicide rates among farmers that are approximately twice that of the general population, we’re sharing our resources to fight stigma, offer support, and educate agricultural communities about the importance of caring about and maintaining sound mental health,” says [insert name here]. “For the past 70 years, Mental Health America’s month-long awareness campaign has primarily targeted the Americans in general, and for the first time we are joining this movement to focus on providing appropriate tools specific to more rural and agricultural communities.”

The campaign begins April 29, 2019 and runs through May 26. Topics include:

Week 1: Science of Stress and Suicide Risk

Week 2: Referral Resources

Week 3. Coping with Substance Abuse/Opioids

Week 4: Cultivating Resiliency

Week 5: Break the Stigma

Join us by sharing the resources [insert specifics here] at [insert website here]. If you are active on social media be sure to display the green ribbon [add photo] and use the following hashtags: #USAgCenters #WhyCare #GreenRibbon, #CureStigma, and #MentalHealthAwareness.

The U.S. Agricultural Safety and Health Centers (www.cdc.gov/niosh/oep/agctrhom.html) are funded by the National Institute for Occupational Health and Safety.

Op-Ed

[As part of Mental Health Awareness Month, we are encouraging the submission of an op-ed discussing the issues of mental health in agricultural workforce. Please consider submitting the op-ed in May to a local publication such as your daily or weekly newspaper].

Ideas and tips for an Op-Ed:

- Craft a clear message and focus tightly on one idea or argument. Tell readers, up front in the piece, why they should care.
- Examples topics on mental health may include those similar to the weekly themes:
 - Science of suicide and why it is important in the agricultural community
 - Highlight a change to local referral resources or promote access to these services in your area
 - Share tips on dealing with stress and cultivating resiliency that are relevant for farm families
 - Share tips on how to overcome stigma, using real-world examples
- Consider partnering with a local community partner or local producer to write the op-ed. Authority matters, and it helps to present a local angle. Readers will look to authors who have a clear understanding of mental health and the issues faced by farmers. Example partners may include:
 - Local mental health care providers
 - Producer-advocate
 - Director of a local rural response hotline or text network
 - Extension expert
- Although the purpose of the op-ed is to offer an opinion, use facts and evidence-based information to support the argument or story. Provide data and statistics that support your piece. Writers are encouraged to use the 80-20 rule, 80% new information, 20% opinion.
- Writing about mental health and suicide prevention can be a delicate matter. The Suicide Prevention Resource Center has a nice guide for how to engage with the media and craft effective suicide prevention messages:
http://www.sprc.org/sites/default/files/migrate/library/media_guide.pdf
- At the end of the Op-ed, share a link to one or two resources so the reader can take action.

Webinar – May 10th, 12:00 – 1:00pm CDT



Suicide and the agriculture way of life: What you need to know

Register online at:

<http://bit.ly/MHAWWebinar>

After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about how to join.

Description: This webinar will help identify some of the risks and protective factors that farmers face related to suicide. It will give attendees some tools and strategies to identify if someone is at risk, to ask difficult questions, and find resources for additional support. Discussion will last approximately 40-45 minutes, followed by an interactive Q & A period. This webinar will be recorded and made available after the session for those who could not make the live session or for those who would like to listen again.

Presenter Bio:

Shauna Reitmeier, MSW, has over 20 years of experience in the behavioral healthcare and cognitive disabilities fields. She currently serves as the Chief Executive Officer of the Northwestern Mental Health Center, which serves a comprehensive array of behavioral healthcare services to adults, children and families across six (6) rural and frontier counties of Northwest Minnesota. Her background of growing up on her family's two-generation farm, working the fields during harvest and experiencing the stressors and joys the agriculture way of life brings has brought awareness and insight to her work within the communities she serves.



For questions about the webinar, contact Doris Mold, project leader of the Cultivating Resiliency Project, at doris@sunriseag.net. The project was funded by a UMASH partner grant.

Videos

Title	Source	YouTube
Agriculture Mental Health Motion Graphic	Ag Health and Safety Alliance, Upper Midwest Center For Agricultural Safety and Health	https://youtu.be/Jt9Tt3CcJuY
Suicide prevention specialists and mental health care providers talk about suicide prevention in rural, agricultural communities.	Iowa's Center for Agricultural Health and Safety	https://youtu.be/rWDSKCnZWDA
The surprising rate of farmer suicide: Listen to America	Huffington Post/ Minnesota Department of Agriculture	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5W-361bRF5k

Social Media Kit

Note: Each ‘message’ in the Social Media kit has been constructed so that it can be shared on Facebook, Twitter, or both (<280 characters in the text). The Twitter character count limits the number of hashtags that you can use. However on Facebook, the more hashtags that you can use—the better! The use of both popular and unique hashtags will increase viewership and engagement. Don’t forget to tag other stakeholder groups and Ag Centers in your posts.

	facebook	twitter
Other	@American Farm Bureau @NAMICommunicate @nationalagrability @mentalhealthamerica @SuicidePreventionResourceCenter @agrisafe.network <u>@aghealthandsafety</u> <u>@WomenFoodAgNet</u>	@Farm Bureau @NAMICommunicate @NatIAgrAbility @MentalHealthAm @SPRCtweets
U.S. Ag Centers	@cophunmc @CultivateSafety @GPCAH @CSUVetMedBioSci @nccrahs @farmmedicine @NYCAMH @PNASHcenter @SCAHIP @swagcenter @umashcenter @AgHealthUCD @unmccscash	@CultivateSafety @HICAHS @GPCAH @FarmMedicine @PNASHCenter @SCAHIP @SouthwestAg95 @umash_umn @AgHealthUCD

Week 1: Science of Stress and Suicide Risk

April 29 – May 5

This week, get ready to share the facts—the goal is to share the science about suicide risk and mental health in agricultural communities. We will also share some findings on how to recognize signs, symptoms, and the most common sources of stress on the farm. This is important because chronic, prolonged stress can lead to more advanced anxiety and depression. You may choose to highlight the “Signs and Stress” fact sheet generated by the UMASH Center, or co-brand it with your organizational logo.

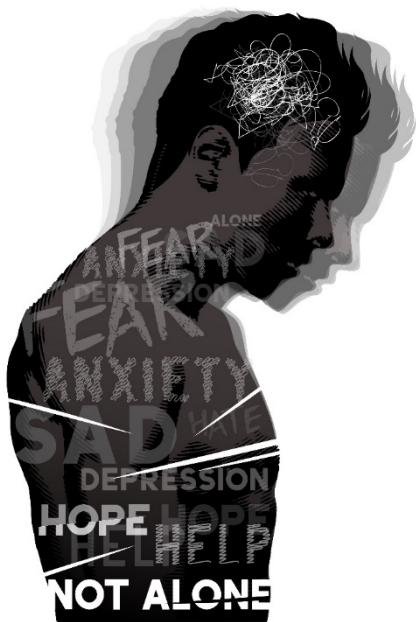
During Week 1, use the following hashtags: #SuicideRisk #MentalHealthAwareness #WarningSigns #SymptomsofStress #USAgCenters #WhyCare #GreenRibbon #CureStigma #Coping #AgTwitter #MentalHealth #MentalHealthMonday (only on Monday) #MentalHealthMatters

Week 1 Social Media Messages:

- ✓ Death by suicide is the 10th leading cause of death in the U.S. Living in rural areas and working in agriculture are increased risk factors. This webinar on May 10th will help you identify the risks and protective factors that farmers face related to suicide. *Register online at:* <http://bit.ly/MHAWWebinar> @umashcenter @aghealthandsafety @mnagriculture @UofMNExt @nationalagrability
- ✓ Do you have a loved one who may be experiencing stress on the farm? Chronic stress can lead to anxiety and depression. It is important to check the signs and symptoms: <http://bit.ly/MHAM001> @umashcenter @NAMICommunicate @nationalagrability
- ✓ Suicide prevention specialists and mental health care providers talk about the importance of suicide prevention among farmers: <https://youtu.be/rWDSKCnZWDA> @gpcah @IACenterAgSafetyHealth @NAMICommunicate @gpcah @nationalagrability
- ✓ Pay attention to warning signs. There are many ways to become aware if an agricultural worker may be at risk for suicide. For information, visit <http://bit.ly/MHAM002>. @agrisafe.network
- ✓ Change in routine? Reduced care of livestock? Children showing signs of stress? These are all signs of chronic, prolonged stress in farm families. To learn more, go to <http://bit.ly/MHAM003> @iowastateuniversityextension
- ✓ Sean Brotherson, NDSU Extension family life specialist, talks about understanding and managing key stressors in farming and ranching. <https://youtu.be/M266Fd1vlfM> @NDSUCCV @nationalagrability
- ✓ Sometimes you NEED help, and sometimes you ARE the help. Learn about signs and symptoms of stress on the farm. Addressing stress is important for prevention of anxiety and depression. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Jt9Tt3CcJuY&feature=youtu.be> @umashcenter @aghealthandsafety @NAMICommunicate @nationalagrability

- ✓ Ted Matthews, director of rural mental health for Minnesota, says for every one suicide, 25 attempts go unreported. Check out the article in National Hog Farmer: <http://bit.ly/MHAM004> @NationalHogFarmer
- ✓ This 2017 **The Guardian** article shared two powerful stories of farmers in Iowa and Kansas who have been affected by depression or considered suicide. <http://bit.ly/americasfarmerssuicide>

Promotional Image(s) for Week 1 (Jpeg)





Week 2: Referral Resources

May 6 – May 12

This week, we will encourage the promotion of referral resources (like hotlines and texting systems) nationally and locally. Promotion of prevention strategies (like QPR and Mental Health First Aid) may also be appropriate, as they link to referral resources.

During Week 2, use the following hashtags: #SuicidePrevention #GetHelpNow #TalktoMe #StigmaFree #USAgCenters #WhyCare #GreenRibbon #CureStigma #AgTwitter #Coping #MentalHealth #SuicidePrevention #MentalHealthMatters

Week 2 Social Media Messages:

- ✓ It's not too late to join us for this week's webinar, "Suicide and the agriculture way of life: What you need to know". Details provided below. *Register online at:* <http://bit.ly/MHAWWebinar> @umashcenter @aghealthandsafety_@mnagriculture @UofMNExt @nationalagrability @afsp
- ✓ If you are a FARMER who needs to talk to someone directly (or is someone who is worried about a farmer), #FarmAid is there to listen. You can call the farmer hotline at 1-800-FARM-AID. Staff answer the hotline M-F 9am – 5pm ET. <http://bit.ly/MHAM010> @FarmAid @nationalagrability
- ✓ Disasters happen on the farm. Not sure who to call in times of crisis? The National Suicide Prevention Lifeline can connect you with a crisis center CLOSEST TO YOU. Calls are confidential and free. Call 800-273-TALK (8255) or visit www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org. @SuicidePreventionResourceCenter @nationalagrability @afsp
- ✓ Prefer text over talking in times of crisis? Check out the Crisis Text line. Text NAMI, TALK, or HELLO to 741-741. @CrisisTextLine @NAMICommunicate @gpcah #CrisisTextLine @afsp
- ✓ Comments about suicide should never be discounted. If you or someone you know is contemplating suicide, call 1-800-SUICIDE (1-800-784-2433) or 1-800-273-TALK (1-800-273-8255). @SuicidePreventionResourceCenter @afsp
- ✓ Find out what your state is doing to prevent suicide. Includes state suicide prevention plans, state data, and how to contact people involved in suicide prevention in your state. <http://www.sprc.org/states> @SuicidePreventionResourceCenter @NAMICommunicate @afsp
- ✓ Some agricultural workers prefer texting over talking. There are many referral resources for texters who way to move from "hot moments" to a "cool calm". Visit <https://www.crisistextline.org/referrals> to learn more. @CrisisTextLine @NAMICommunicate #CrisisTextLine @afsp
- ✓ Living on a farm is a busy lifestyle. If you are trying to care for your mind, body, and soul --but still feel like you are struggling with your mental health, visit <http://www.mhascreening.org> to check your symptoms. The screening is free AND confidential. @mentalhealthamerica
- ✓ [LOCAL OPTION: Promote your state or regions local farm or rural hotline here]
- ✓ [LOCAL OPTION: Promote any local QPR training or QPR info here]

Promotional Image(s) for Week 2 (Jpeg)



Week 3: Prevention of Substance Abuse

May 13 – May 19

This week, we will aim to raise awareness about coping mechanisms, as well as issues with substance abuse and opioids.

During Week 3, use the following hashtags: #HowtoCope #OpioidEpidemic #DrugOverdose #farmtownstrong #USAgCenters #WhyCare #GreenRibbon #CureStigma #AgTwitter #Coping #MentalHealth #MentalHealthMatters

Week 3 Social Media Messages:

- ✓ In general, rural residents have higher rates of depression, substance abuse and completed suicide. Farmers face additional challenges to maintaining their mental health. Learn more about the unique stressors among farmers by reading the #FarmAid Fact Sheet <http://bit.ly/MHAM010> @FarmAid @mnagriculture @RedRiverRadioNetwork @nationalagrability
- ✓ In 2017, a survey by the National Farmers Union and the American Farm Bureau Federation found that 74 % of farmers have been directly impacted by the opioid crisis. Read more at <https://farmtownstrong.org/>. @American Farm Bureau
- ✓ Over half of rural Americans believe that #ReducingStigma will be an effective means to solving the opioid crisis in farm country. Learn more at <https://farmtownstrong.org/> @American Farm Bureau @nationalagrability
- ✓ According to the CDC, the rates of drug overdose deaths from opioids have been rising fast in rural areas. Know where to go for help. SAMHSA's National Helpline is a free, confidential, 24/7, 365-day-a-year treatment referral service (English and Spanish) for families facing substance use disorders. Call 1-800-622-HELP. <https://suicidepreventionlifeline.org/>
- ✓ "In my opinion, Narcan should be part of basic First Aid and CPR," says Debra Kelsey, a local health care facilitator with the Massachusetts Fishing Partnership Support Services. Read more as local fishermen shared stories of their deckmate's struggle with drug use and opiates. <http://bit.ly/MHAM005> @Bassett.Network

Promotional Image(s) for Week 3 (Jpeg)



Week 4: Cultivating Resiliency

May 20 – May 26

This week, we offer some tools on how to weather the stress and cultivate resiliency. Developing coping skills plays a big role in improving mental health. Tips on supporting yourself and others will be shared.

During Week 4, use the following hashtags: #CultivatingResiliency #MentalHealthAwareness #StopStress #USAgCenters #WhyCare #GreenRibbon #CureStigma #AgTwitter #Coping #MentalHealth #SuicidePrevention #MentalHealthMatters #farmtownstrong

Week 4 Social Media Messages:

- ✓ Taking breaks is important for improving mental health. Feeling fatigued when operating machinery can also be dangerous. Turn off the engine. Take 10 minutes to rest and reset. Small breaks not only improve resiliency, but they can also lessen the effects of whole body vibration. Seems like a win-win! @gpcah @iowastateuniversityextension
- ✓ “Many people are struggling and just need to know they’re not alone,” said Minnesota Agriculture Commissioner Thom Petersen. “TransFARMation is a powerful series. We hear from farmers, ranchers and others in agriculture talk about some of the strategies and solutions that helped them when times got tough.” The in-depth podcasts feature interviews with farmers and can be found at www.rrfn.com/transformation. @mnagriculture @RedRiverRadioNetwork @gpcah @umash @nationalagrability
- ✓ Be a leader. This new interactive online series can help women in agriculture cultivate resiliency by focusing on what they can control in these challenging times and connect them with resources. To learn more about the #CultivatingResiliency project, go to <http://umash.umn.edu/cultivating-resiliency-webinars/> @umashcenter @nationalagrability @WomenFoodAgNet
- ✓ Supporting the mental health of your farm employees is a key aspect of farm management. Consider a safety talk on stress management. For tips and topics, visit <http://bit.ly/MHAM006> @iowastateuniversityextension
- ✓ To prepare for market reality, every farm needs an operating plan, and an exit strategy. It’s not fun to talk about but it is important to know how to reallocate resources to another enterprise. To learn more about how to develop a plan, see the resources from ISU Extension Dairy Team at <http://bit.ly/MHAM007> @iowastateuniversityextension @welovecows
- ✓ Are you interested in sharing your own story about mental health or stress on social media? See some #RealStory guidance from @SuicidePreventionResourceCenter for how to craft a story about survival, hope, and healing—aimed at saving lives and restoring hope. <http://bit.ly/MHAM008> @gpcah

Promotional Image(s) for Week 4 (Jpeg)



Week 5: Break the Stigma

May 27 – June 2

To wrap up the campaign, emphasize that talking about stress and mental health is something *everyone* should do. End the month by sharing stories, tips, and continuing to raise awareness!

During Week 5, use the following hashtags: #TalktoMe #StigmaFree #MentalHealthAwareness #USAgCenters #WhyCare #GreenRibbon #CureStigma #ok2talk #AgTwitter #Coping #MentalHealth #SuicidePrevention #MentalHealthMatters

- ✓ The Minnesota Department of Agriculture and the Red River Farm Network have joined forces to create a new radio series called *TransFARMation*. The series aims to increase awareness and reduce inhibitions about acknowledging farmer stress while highlighting sources of support. The in-depth podcasts feature interviews with farmers and can be found at www.rfn.com/transformation. @mnagriculture @RedRiverRadioNetwork @gpcah @umash @nationalagrability
- ✓ Stigma may not directly affect you, but it prevents the 1 in 5 Americans with mental health conditions from seeking help. Rural, agricultural communities can be highly influenced by stigma. Get tested for stigma here: <https://www.curestigma.org/> @NAMICommunicate @nationalagrability
- ✓ Do you have stigma when it comes to mental illnesses? Take this three question quiz, and as a reward you'll get a FREE emoji sticker pack that supports people living with mental health conditions. <https://www.curestigma.org/> @NAMICommunicate
- ✓ Stigma is toxic to those affected by #mentalhealth conditions. It creates shame, fear and silence in our rural communities. It prevents people from seeking help. Take the quiz today and learn how to #CureStigma w/ @NAMICommunicate: www.curestigma.org
- ✓ When Rose Jeter posted about farmer suicides on social media, Amy Johnson responded. Together, they have worked in their state of Virginia on mental health policies to be adopted at the state level. Read more about how these young women are working to #BreakStigma. @AmericanFarmBureau @nationalagrability @WomenFoodAgNet <http://bit.ly/MHAM009>
- ✓ There are many ways to initiate, maintain or improve communication with farm family members, neighbors and community members. To learn more about building relationships in stressful times, go to the #CultivatingResiliency project, go to <http://umash.umn.edu/cultivating-resiliency-webinars/> @umashcenter @nationalagrability

Promotional Image(s) for Week 5 (Jpeg)

Break The Stigma

Mental Health Awareness Month

