

Training Module: Stress Management

Objective: To learn to manage stress on the farm or workplace.

Trainer's Note: Learning to manage stress can improve mental and physical health. Identify the stress factors in the workplace. Discuss how to manage or eliminate those factors. Invite a mental health or time management professional to speak.

Background

Farming is one of the most stressful occupations in the United States. It is important to know how to manage stress levels and to reduce the effects of unwanted stress. One way to manage stress is to talk to other people. This support might come from family, church members, friends, or other farmers and ranchers. There are also several organized self-help groups that offer emotional support and practical help. Consult a family doctor, mental health professional, or religious leader for additional help.

Three Ways to Help Manage Stress:

- Manage mental and physical health.
- Know the warning signs of stress and monitor stress levels.
- Change your reaction to stressful events.

Stress can be reduced by making lifestyle changes.

- Keep a positive attitude.
- Accept that stress is a part of life.
- Clearly define home and work responsibilities.
- Manage time.
- Set realistic goals.
- Learn to relax. Employees who take mid-morning and afternoon breaks will be able to get more accomplished.

Eat an adequate and nutritious breakfast each day. Hunger can make people less able to cope with stress. High blood pressure and cholesterol levels increase the chances of a stroke and heart attack. Caffeine (coffee, tea, soft drinks, and some drugs) stimulates the nervous system and can cause nervousness and tension. Alcohol and drugs can be addictive and may reduce the ability to cope with stress. A basic exercise program, in addition to farm work, is likely to lessen stress. The exercise will produce healthier heart, lungs, arteries and will elevate your mood and encourage a healthy self-concept. Have a complete medical exam before beginning a program.

****Know the warning signs of stress related problems and seek help.**

Early Warning Signs of Stress-Related Problems:

- Moodiness
- Withdrawing from responsibility
- Trouble falling asleep
- Poor emotional control
- Severe feelings of helplessness and dependency
- Chronic fatigue and susceptibility to illness
- Marked change in appetite or sex drive

Review The Following Points

- Stress can be managed.
- Seek help when a problem is discovered.
- A positive attitude makes a difference.
- Eat a well balanced diet.

True or False Answer Key

1. T, 2. T, 3. T, 4. T, 5. T



Agricultural Tailgate Safety Training

Agricultural Safety Program

True or False

Name _____

- | | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1. Controlling the diet can control stress. | T | F |
| 2. Exercise may help to manage stress. | T | F |
| 3. Setting realistic goals helps reduce stress. | T | F |
| 4. Stress is a part of life that everyone must deal with to be active and productive. | T | F |
| 5. Seek help for stress management before it gets out of control. | T | F |