



## FARM STRESS INVENTORY

Farming and Ranching have unique occupational hazards and stresses with strong traditions of being an independent occupation. The tendency is not to openly talk about problems or ask for support until things are absolutely desperate. Taking an inventory of your situation is the first step.



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Farming has ongoing situations that cause stress. Common farm stressors are finances, daily hassles, and lack of control over the weather, heavy work overloads, and conflict in relationships.

**Complete the following inventory to identify your stressors. 1 = low stress 5 = high stress.**

	1	2	3	4	5
Sudden and significant increase in debt load					
Significant production loss due to disease or pests					
Insufficient regular cash flow to meet financial obligations or for daily necessities					
Delay in planting or harvesting due to weather					
Media distortions of farm situation					
Low commodity prices					
Significant changes in type or size of farming operation					
Meeting with loan officer for additional loan					
Purchase of major machinery, facility or livestock					
Not being considered part of the farm business by others					
Taking an off-the-farm job to meet expenses					
Prolonged bad weather					
Problems with weeds or insects					
Machinery breakdown at a critical time					
Not enough time to spend with spouse					
Crop loss due to weather					
Illness during planting/harvesting					
Deciding when to sell					
Rising expenses					
Government policies and regulations					
Concerns about the continued financial viability of the farm					
Having a loan request turned down					
Farming-related accident					

	1	2	3	4	5
Government free-trade policies					
Government “cheap food” policies					
Metric conversion					
Breeding or reproductive difficulties with livestock					
No farm help or loss of help when needed					
Need to learn/adjust to new government regulations and policies					
Spouse doesn't have enough time for child-rearing					
Increased workload at peak times					
Unplanned interruptions					
Use of hazardous chemicals on the farm					
Dealing with salespeople					
Long work hours					
Few vacations away from the farm					
Feeling isolated on the farm					
Having to travel long distances for services, shopping and health care					
Pressure of having too much to do in too little time					
Keeping up with new technology and products					
Worrying about market conditions					
Having to make decisions without all the necessary information					
Being expected to work on the farm as well as manage the house					
Worrying about owing money					
Worrying about keeping the farm in the family					
Not seeing enough people					
Not having enough money or time for entertainment and recreation					
Death of a parent or member of immediate family					
Death of a friend					
Problems balancing work and family responsibilities					
Problems with relatives in farm operating agreement					
Divorce or marital separation					
Problems with a partnership					
Daughter or son leaving home					
Trouble with parents or in-laws					
Conflict with spouse over spending priorities					
Major decisions being made without my knowledge or input					
Having to wear too many hats, eg. farmer, spouse, father, son etc					
Surface-rights negotiations					
Other recent events which have had an impact on your life					

## PUTTING YOUR INVENTORY SCORE IN PERSPECTIVE:

**If the majority of your scores are 4 or 5:** It is important to devote immediate attention to stress management. Give yourself credit for the tough times you have survived. Long term stress depletes your internal resources. It is common to identify with these farm stresses in your operation. Remember there are people who will listen and help brainstorm ways to cope. There is no shame in talking to someone about your concerns.

**If the majority of your scores are 3:** Focus on your stress management strengths. Continue to expand your coping skills. Set goals that allow you take control of what is controllable on your farm. The skills you are using and those you will develop can help you to deal with uncontrollable situations that arise.

**If the majority of your scores are 1 and 2:** You have stress coping skills. Share your skills with others. Farming will continue to challenge you, so continue to communicate, prioritize daily tasks and support your family, friends, workers and community in difficult times.

For a list of mental health resources, visit [domore.ag/resources](https://domore.ag/resources).

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This resource was adapted in part from "Farming and Mental Health." For more information visit [cchsa-ccssma.usask.ca](https://cchsa-ccssma.usask.ca).

The Building Resilience on the Farm series is a part of Canadian Agricultural Safety Week 2019. For more information, visit [agsafetyweek.ca](https://agsafetyweek.ca).