



Farm Center Offers 24/7 Hotline, Other Counseling Resources in New Pilot Program

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MADISON – As of July 1, Wisconsin farmers facing increased stress and other challenges can access additional free and confidential counseling resources by contacting the Farm Center at the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP).

As part of a new pilot program, the Farm Center can now connect callers to a 24/7 Farmer Wellness Hotline. The hotline can be reached at 1-888-901-2558. Licensed mental health professionals contracted by the department will provide immediate, in-the-moment care.

In addition to the 24/7 hotline, long-term options are available:

- Callers can schedule ongoing tele-health counseling sessions from a contracted licensed counselor based in Wisconsin, with referrals made through the 24/7 hotline or through the Wisconsin Farm Center (1-800-942-2474);
- Persons who prefer an in-person session can request to meet with a local provider through the Farm Center’s longstanding Counseling Voucher Program.

“The 24/7 Farmer Counseling Hotline is available around the clock as a welcoming ear for farmers who need to talk through a challenging time in their life,” said Farm Center Director Jayne Krull. “We hope that this initial pilot program will help us better understand whether a 24/7 hotline and tele-counseling are viable tools for our farmers with mental health needs.”

This pilot program is made possible by funding that was provided in Governor Tony Evers’ 2019-2021 biennial budget and approved by the state legislature. The 24/7 hotline and tele-counseling services are two of several initiatives developed by the Farm Center in response to increased challenges faced by the agricultural industry.

In June, the Farm Center launched ‘Rural Realities,’ a podcast offering advice to farmers and farm service providers about managing stress and anxiety. To listen to the podcast, visit FarmCenter.wi.gov. Later this month, the Farm Center will begin hosting QPR trainings (Question-Persuade-Refer) for people who work closely with farmers, so they can learn how to identify the warning signs of a suicide crisis and direct the person to appropriate resources.

Since the mid-1980s, the Farm Center, part of the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP), has provided a variety of farmer services including financial and business consultation, farm succession planning, conflict mediation, and consultation related to production opportunities and challenges. For more information, contact FarmCenter@wisconsin.gov.

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