

## The Help Line is here when you need it:

- We won't judge you
- We have ideas and resources for handling stress, anxiety and depression
- We can help identify additional options for dealing with your specific situation
- We have experts trained to help you if you or someone you know is thinking of suicide or experiencing emotional or psychiatric crises
- We treat all calls as confidential

**We can put you in touch with services in your own community. There is a range of mental health services available across Alberta covered by Alberta Health Care Insurance.**



## Mental Health Help Line 1-877-303-2642

(Toll-free from anywhere in Alberta)

- Confidential
- Serving communities across Alberta
- Available 24 hours daily, seven days per week
- Access to mental health professionals
- Crisis intervention
- Callers can choose to be anonymous
- Available to individuals, family members, concerned others and community agencies dealing with stress, anxiety, depression, suicide and other emotional or psychiatric crises

For non-emergency information check out:

**[www.amhb.ab.ca](http://www.amhb.ab.ca)**

For further agricultural information, call Alberta Agriculture, Food and Rural Development's

## Alberta Ag-Info Centre

**1-866-882-7677**

(Toll-free from anywhere in Alberta)

8:00 am – 5:00 pm

Monday to Friday except stat holidays

or check out Ropin' the Web at:

**[www.agric.gov.ab.ca](http://www.agric.gov.ab.ca)**

# Managing Stressful Times



## Helping Alberta ranchers and farmers cope with ...

- stress
- anxiety
- depression
- suicide
- emotional or psychiatric crises

**The stress that ranchers and farmers experience on a day-to-day basis can feel like ‘make or break’ pressure. Know your warning signs and the resources available to help.**

## Warning Signs of Stress

### *Physical*

- increased heart rate
- rapid breathing
- tense muscles
- increased blood pressure
- sleep and appetite problems

### *Emotional*

- irritability
- anger, yelling and losing one’s temper
- lack of concentration
- feeling ‘jumpy’ and anxious

### *If unchecked, stress can lead to ...*

- insomnia
- stomach ulcers
- high blood pressure
- back pain and headaches
- heart disease
- depression and suicide

## Healthy ways to deal with stress

- Share the situation openly and honestly with family members. Ignoring problems and hiding feelings can hurt your family.
- Many ranchers and farmers find it extremely frustrating that hard work does not always lead to success. You are not alone. Help your neighbours and let them help you.
- You might be feeling “What did I do to deserve this?” Accept that some things can’t be changed. Learn to distinguish between things you can and cannot control.

**Don’t** use alcohol or drugs. Substance abuse can be an outcome of bottled up feelings.

**Don’t** get stuck thinking the “If only I had...” scenarios. These will not help you and can lead to more feelings of frustration.



## Give yourself a break!

While you may not be able to control the source of your stress, you can manage its effect on your life. Try these suggestions:

- Keep a structure to your day. Set priorities and plan to accomplish small goals.
- Eat right, exercise and try to get enough sleep even if that means taking a nap if you find you cannot sleep at night.
- For some people, keeping busy is important. Cut down on the demands, set priorities and plan to accomplish small goals. Keep a structure to your day.

## Despite your best efforts ...

You may find yourself needing extra help. Prolonged and/or unresolved stress can lead to depression. Depression is easily treated. The sooner you reach out, the sooner you will feel better. Consider ...

- Do I have family or friends who I can trust and talk to for support?
- Can my spiritual advisor/organization offer assistance?
- Can I talk to my doctor for assistance or referral for services?
- Are there other agencies in my community that can help? (Check your telephone book.)

**It is a sign of strength to ask for help if you need it.**

*Remember, there are many resources in Alberta that you can reach to for help.*