# 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

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

# 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!

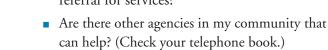
While you may not be able to control the source of your stress, you can manage its effect on your life. Try these suggestions:

- 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?



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