



## Farms and Farmers under Stress:

### How can Service Providers Build Resilience?

Program Planning Forum – March 26, 2021 – 9-11:00 a.m.

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#### Background

The goal of the forum was to solicit feedback about various topic areas in farm stress, available resources, and the agricultural industry that could become part of multi-part series for agricultural services providers.

For the past two years, the University of Maryland Extension developed and delivered educational sessions related to farm stress and mental health. We learned that some of our stakeholders and organization partners wanted to learn how to serve the farming population dealing with multiple stressors.

We applied for and received funding to increase understanding and build skills among Maryland's agricultural services providers. This capacity-building professional development program aims to help our farming population decrease stress by building resilience.

Due to COVID-19 restrictions on group meetings, we decided to conduct an online program planning forum held March 26, 2021. The purpose was to engage Maryland agricultural services providers in telling us how best to provide professional development educational programs that would help them build capacity with the farming population they serve.

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#### March 26, 2021, Forum

(See agenda on next page)

Over 42 invitees participated in a 2-hour session with two presentations and facilitated breakout discussions on five topics. At the start, they identified these top 4 observations about farmers in the past year: Anxiety, Financial Worries, Depression, and Burnout.

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#### Results of Forum

After the forum, they were invited to complete a short survey. Over two-thirds (69%) preferred 1-5 hours of professional development done virtually and in person held mid-week.

Comfort with these topical areas are shown from most to least:

1. Stress Management;
2. Legal and Regulatory;
3. Physical and Mental Health;
4. Financial Well-Being.

Their preferred topics for professional development are shown from highest to lowest:

1. Legal and Regulatory;
2. Financial Well-Being;
3. Stress Management;
4. Physical and Mental Health.

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The project team has begun designing curriculum based on results to be conducted in the fall of 2021.

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**Farms and Farmers Under Stress: How can Service Providers Build Resilience?  
March 26 2021, 9am-11am**

**Agenda**

Welcome - Shannon Dill, Extension Educator, AgFS

Feedback Poll 1

Farm Stress Overview - Dr. Bonnie Braun, Professor Emeritus

Farm Stress Education - Dr. Jesse Ketterman, Extension Educator, FCS

Feedback Poll 2

Break/breakouts and time for feedback on the following areas:

Stress Management

Physical and Mental Health

Financial Well Being

Legal and Regulatory Issues

Education and Training Program

Reconvene and Wrap Up

Announcements

Thank you for your time

Short follow up survey to share reflection and resources

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