

PROMOTING FARM HEALTH AND VITALITY THROUGH MENTAL HEALTH TRAINING



UNIVERSITY OF DELAWARE
COOPERATIVE
EXTENSION

ISSUE

For the past five years, many factors have contributed pressure on farming enterprises and on the health and vitality of farmers, ranchers and farm families, as well as the professionals who provide education and services for the farming population.



**POOR
WEATHER**



**VOLATILE
MARKETS**



**DECLINING
COMMODITY PRICES**



TARIFFS



REGULATIONS

Building a network for farmers, ranchers, their families and those that serve them, is critical. These networks can address stress, financial and overall wellness and mental health issues to protect the vitality of farming operations and Delaware's economy.

RESPONSE

A partnership between

- UD Cooperative Extension
- Mental Health Association in Delaware
- Beebe Health
- Delaware Farm Bureau



3 MENTAL HEALTH FIRST AID (MHFA) TRAINING SESSIONS

for professionals working
with farm audiences
or their families.



Mental health diagnoses



How they present



Strategies to support and
help affected individuals

Underwritten by

- Sustainable Coastal Communities Initiative

IMPACTS

71

individuals
participated in
MHFA workshops

18

individuals
completed a
post-program
evaluation,
6 months later.

94% are confident they can identify stress symptoms in clientele.

67% are confident they can talk with clientele about mental well-being.

72% are confident they can assist clients facing challenges that impact mental health.

72% are confident they can assist someone who is suicidal.

55% were likely to taken leadership roles related to mental health within their organization.

61% were likely to talk with distressed clients about mental well-being.

67% were likely to assist clients facing challenges that impact their mental health.

78% were likely to share what you learned during the MFHA training with others.

89% are confident they can contact community assistance for someone who is suicidal.

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ISSUE

For the past five years, bad weather, volatile markets, declining commodity prices, tariffs and regulations have contributed pressure on farming enterprises and on the health and vitality of farmers, ranchers and farm families. Those pressures are also felt by professionals who provide education and services for the farming population. In Delaware, building a network for farmers, ranchers, their families and those that serve them, is critical. These networks can address stress, financial and overall wellness and mental health issues to protect the vitality of farming operations and Delaware's economy.

RESPONSE

During 2019, a Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) training was offered once in each county in Delaware. This full-day training provides information about a variety of mental health diagnoses including how they present and strategies to support and help affected individuals. Training sessions were held from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. in Dover, Lewes and Newark, Delaware and morning snack and lunch were strategically provided to help retain attendees throughout the day. The target audience included professionals working with farm audiences or their families. Marketing was conducted through farm organizations and health care service providers.

IMPACT

Seventy-one individuals participated in the hands-on workshops. To determine if longer-term behavior change or an impact on the professional's organization had occurred, a post-program evaluation was conducted via an online Qualtrics survey, 6 months after the training. Eighteen respondents provided feedback (ten who work in education, three who work in mental health and five who work supporting farmers):

As a result of MHFA training, how confident are you now that you can ... (% Moderately to Very Confident.)

- Identify stress symptoms in your clientele? 94%
- Talk with clientele about their mental well-being? 67%
- Assist clients who are facing challenges that impact their mental health? 72%
- Provide assistance to someone who says they are considering suicide? 72%
- Contact the correct community assistance if someone says they are considering suicide? 89%

As a result of MHFA training, how likely are you to ... (% Moderately to Very Likely.)

- Talk with distressed clients about their mental well-being? 61%
- Assist clients who are facing challenges that impact their mental health? 67%
- Share what you learned during the Mental Health First Aid training with others in your organization? 78%
- Taken leadership roles related to mental health within your organization? 55%

RECOGNITION

This program was underwritten by the Sustainable Coastal Communities Initiative and offered as part of a partnership between the Mental Health Association in Delaware (provided certified trainers), Beebe Health and the Delaware Farm Bureau.