

## Supporting Farmers' Mental Wellbeing Guidance for Rural Professionals

### Why this matters:

Farming can be highly rewarding, but it also carries significant pressures, including isolation, long working hours, financial uncertainty, weather impacts and regulatory change. These pressures can contribute to stress, anxiety and depression, and in some cases more serious mental health concerns.

Rural professionals are often in a trusted position and may be among the first to notice when a farmer or client is struggling, hence we have prepared this guidance note.

### Signs someone may need support - be alert to changes such as:

- Withdrawal or increased isolation
- Persistent low mood or anxiety
- Fatigue or lack of motivation
- Increased irritability or anger
- Neglect of farm, paperwork, or livestock
- Financial distress or avoidance
- Talking about feeling overwhelmed, trapped or hopeless

If you notice these signs, a simple conversation and signposting can make a significant difference.

### How to help from a practical perspective:

- Start a conversation in a natural, non-judgemental way
- Listen rather than trying to "fix" the problem
- Acknowledge pressures specific to farming
- Encourage small steps, such as speaking to a support organisation
- Signpost to specialist help (see below)

You do not need to be an expert - your role is to connect them to support.

### Key farming support organisations:

#### Farming Community Network (FCN)

- Confidential support for farmers and families
- Help with emotional, personal and business pressures

Helpline: **03000 111 999**  
(7am-11pm, 365 days)  
or email: **help@fcn.org.uk**

#### RABI (Royal Agricultural Benevolent Institution)

- Specialist mental health counselling and wellbeing support
- Also offers financial and practical assistance

24/7 helpline: **0800 188 4444**

#### Addington Fund

- Practical help in times of hardship (housing, feed, emergency relief)
- Can reduce stress caused by financial or operational crises

Tel: **01926 620135** or visit **addingtonfund.org.uk**

#### Farming Help

- Partnership of FCN, Addington Fund and Forage Aid
- Single point of access for support

Helpline: **03000 111 999**

#### Yellow Wellies (Farm Safety Foundation)

- Focus on mental wellbeing awareness and reducing stigma
- Particularly aimed at younger farmers

Email: **farm\_safety\_foundation@nfmutual.co.uk**



## Specialist rural mental health charities:

### The DPJ Foundation (UK-wide support, Wales-based)

- 24/7 “Share the Load” helpline
- Access to counselling (including outreach/on-farm)

Helpline: **0800 587 4262**

### YANA (You Are Not Alone)

- Support for stress and depression in agriculture

Helpline: **0300 323 0400**

### We Are Farming Minds

- Community-based support network (Herefordshire and beyond)

Support line: **0808 802 0070**  
or text: **07786 203 130**

## General mental health support (24/7):

**Samaritans:** call 116 123  
(free, confidential listening service)

**Mind:** call 0300 102 1234  
(information and support line)

**Shout:** text “SHOUT” to 85258  
(text-based crisis support)

## If someone is in immediate crisis:

Call 999 (emergency services) or direct them to A&E. Stay with them (or ensure someone can) until help is in place.

## Key message for professionals

You are not expected to provide counselling.

Your role is to:

- Notice signs
- Start a conversation
- Signpost early

Early intervention can prevent issues escalating and help protect both people and businesses.

## Suggested wording when signposting

“There are some really good farming charities who understand the pressures you’re under. It might be worth having a confidential chat with them; would you like me to share their details?”