

Dept. of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection: Awarded \$500,000 grant to strengthen stress management resources for Wisconsin farmers

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MADISON, Wis. – The Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP) Farm Center was awarded \$500,000 from the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Farm and Ranch Stress Assistance Network to promote, develop, and increase stress management and mental health resources for Wisconsin farmers. This investment is in addition to the \$100,000 included in Governor Evers' 2021-2023 budget to provide services including the 24/7 hotline, counseling vouchers, and farmers' mental health support groups.

"From unpredictable weather to fluctuating market prices, farmers are faced with challenges every day that can cause stress and anxiety," said DATCP Secretary Randy Romanski. "This funding will help build on stress management and mental health resources to help farmers overcome challenges and continue providing high-quality, nutritious products for our state, nation, and world."

DATCP will use the funding to:

- Promote stress management and mental health programming for Wisconsin farmers by creating, printing, and distributing outreach materials. Develop a series of videos on stress identification, prevention, and management for farmers.
- Adapt existing farm management, financial, and mental health resources into

formats that are more easily accessible by Hmong and Latinx farmers.

Additionally, DATCP will work with partners on resources including:

- The University of Wisconsin-Madison's College of Agricultural and Life Sciences will receive a portion of the grant funding to adapt the [WeCOPE](#) stress management program for a farmer audience in cooperation with the Division of Extension.
- The Midwest Organic and Sustainable Education Service (MOSES) will receive a portion to coordinate peer support training for 18 farmers through the [Wisconsin Peer Specialists Program](#). After training, this group of farmers will establish a support network across the state for farmers utilizing peer support techniques to provide assistance.

About the Farm Center

Since the mid-1980s, the Farm Center has provided Wisconsin farmers a variety of services including financial analysis, farm succession planning, conflict mediation, and business consultation on industry opportunities and challenges. The planned grant activities enhance and complement the efforts already set forth by DATCP's Wisconsin Farm Center. The Center has connected farmers to mental health resources through several initiatives over the past two years, including pilot programs such as a 24/7 farmer wellness helpline (888-901-2558), tele-counseling services, and other new educational programs. These programs were funded through Gov. Tony Evers' 2019-21 and 2021-22 biennial budgets.

For more information, visit farmcenter.wi.gov, call (800) 942-2474, or email farmcenter@wisconsin.gov.