

Dept. of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection: DATCP Farm Center releases online farm culture course for agricultural service providers

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MADISON, Wis. – The Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection's (DATCP) Farm Center announced today the release of a free virtual course that will help agricultural service providers understand the unique stresses and challenges of farming, handle difficult conversations, and recognize signs and symptoms of stress with farm clients. Funded through Gov. Tony Evers' 2021-23 biennial budget, this course is a part of the Farm Center's Farmer Wellness Program that creates and connects Wisconsin farmers to mental health resources.

The course is available at no cost on the [University of Wisconsin-Madison's Continuing Education Program website](#). Ag lenders, milk haulers, nutritionists, veterinarians, farm equipment technicians, and others that provide services to farmers regularly are encouraged to take the training. Each module includes a 15 to 20-minute video presentation followed by interactive questions. The course is self-paced and modules can be viewed in any order.

This course is organized into the following five modules:

1. The Culture of Farming by Dan Smith – President and CEO, Cooperative Network
2. Recognizing Farmer Stress by Renee Sutkay – Associate Director, Journey Mental Health

3. Financial Unpredictability in Farming by Paul Dietmann – Senior Lending Officer, Compeer Financial
4. Navigating Difficult Conversations with Farmers by Elaine Froese – Farm Transition Specialist
5. Resources and Self-care for Agriculture Service Providers by Chris Frakes – Program Director, Farm Well Wisconsin

About the Farm Center

Since the mid-1980s, the Farm Center has provided Wisconsin farmers with a variety of services, including financial consulting, transition planning, conflict mediation, veterinary analysis, and veteran farmer assistance.

The Farm Center has also connected farmers to mental health resources through several initiatives over the past two years, including programs such as a 24/7 Farmer Wellness Helpline (888-901-2558), tele-counseling services, counseling vouchers, online farmer support groups, *Rural Realities* podcast, and other new educational programs. These programs were funded through Governor Tony Evers' 2019-21 and 2021-23 biennial budgets.

For more information, visit farmcenter.wi.gov or contact the Farm Center at (800) 942-2474 or farmcenter@wisconsin.gov.