



MAFES Dawg Tracks



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Guard Against Farm Stress

Stress is a terrible partner. It causes one to think “inside the box,” suspecting and predicting all types of negative thoughts. It can become a debilitating problem, sometimes resulting in emotional problems that, if allowed to go uncontrolled, can cause problems within your work, family and yourself.

Following are some tips that can help you to control and combat stress:

MANAGING STRESS:

Signs of Stress-

- Panic attacks, including heart palpitations, sweating, trembling or shaking, sensations of shortness of breath, chest pain or discomfort, difficulty swallowing, nausea or abdominal distress, lightheadedness, derealization or depersonalization, fear of losing control, fear of dying, loss of sensation in extremities, chills or hot flashes.
- Restlessness, with inability to relax.
- Feeling easily fatigued.
- Difficulty concentrating.
- Irritability.
- Muscle Tension and occasional residual pain.
- Sleep disturbance with difficulty falling asleep and awakening with a start.
- Preoccupation with thoughts of dread.

Signs of Depression-

- ✓ Feelings of sadness.
- ✓ Loss of interest in activities.
- ✓ Significant weight loss, not due to dieting or illness, or weight gain of more than 5% of body weight per month.
- ✓ Excessive sleep and/or late night insomnia.
- ✓ Feelings of lethargy, but also feelings of agitation.
- ✓ Loss of energy.
- ✓ Feelings of unworthiness.
- ✓ Diminished ability to concentrate, preoccupation with negatives.
- ✓ Recurrent thoughts of suicide.

CONTROL STRESS-

Steps to Control Stress

- Take a good look at yourself.
- Make a list of things that causes stress in your life.
- Think about how serious a problem stress is for you. Do you feel that you're under constant stress or does it come and go? Think about how stress hurts you. How has it affected your health and work? Has it changed the way you treat or react to other people?
- Try to decide if you are under more pressure now than you were this time a year ago.

Learn How to Manage Stress-

- Talking about problems is a good way to relieve stress. Talk to a trusted and honest friend to share your problems, and together you both might get a workable solution.
- Recognize Stressors – Stressors are tightening of the neck and shoulders, stomach problems or changes in behaviors or relationships. The body is equipped with a complex system that signals high stress levels.
- Look at the factors causing stress and analyze the ones that are hurting you and the ones you can control. We can't control the weather or prices of goods, but some we can.
- If you have a major problem, break it down in smaller parts and try to solve one part at a time.
- Schedule your time realistically. Don't try to do more than the hours allow.
- Take occasional short breaks - a few minutes away from your work area will refresh you.
- Learn to relax - sit back, get comfortable and day dream for a few minutes.
- Develop a hobby or a sport - both are great stress relievers. Gets your mind off the work.

Take care of yourself-

The American Heart Association offers these tips for fighting stress:

- **Exercise** – It makes you feel better and eases tension.
- **Eat Well** – Food is fuel for the body. Eat a balanced diet.
- **Sleep & Rest** – Get plenty of rest and sleep - it refreshes your mind and body.
- **Balance work & Play** - Recreation can help. Remember the old saying, “All work and no play makes Johnny a dull boy?” But all play and no work will also make Johnny a dull boy. All play and no work will make Johnny useless for work.
- **Learn to accept things you cannot change** - Look for the good points in people and situations, overlook the bad ones. Build on the bad ones by being an example that portrays positive actions.

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Excerpts: [www.cfbf.com/rhs/farm stress](http://www.cfbf.com/rhs/farm%20stress).
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