



## Challenges we face in rural communities

You take care of your land, your farm, your animals, your family, and yourself. It's hard to focus on everything – especially when you've got a lot on your mind. But, your family is your most significant resource. For your family to thrive, they need you to be there.

When was the last time you remember being present in the moment with your family, and were you present, or were you focused on all the things that needed to be done? Farm stress is natural, and it can impact your relationships, your family, and your health.

## Locations

SEKMHC

IOLA | 304 North Jefferson Ave

CHANUTE | 1322 S Grant

FT. SCOTT | 401 Woodland Hills Blvd

HUMBOLDT | 1106 South Ninth

GARNETT | 519 South Elm

PLEASANTON | 505 West Fifteenth

YATES CENTER | 204 S Main

## Let's Connect

### Phone

1-866-973-2241

24/7 Crisis Availability

### Website

[www.sekmhc.org](http://www.sekmhc.org)



# Rural Mental Health

In Southeast Kansas



**Southeast Kansas  
Mental Health  
Center**







## Farm stress, what is it?

Farmers can be isolated, geographically and socially, since they often work alone. They are self-reliant, independent, and unlikely to ask for help.

Many come from a tradition of not sharing their challenges, choosing to tough them out alone. They work long, hard days and may deprioritize their health and well-being to get the job done.

Approximately 30% of rural adults suffer from anxiety or depression. Additionally, 10% of rural adults have seriously considered suicide in the past 30 days (statistics from June 2023).

## Who does it affect?

Farm stress affects every generation on the farm. The backbone of Kansas agriculture is family farms, with 84.6% of farms in Kansas being family-owned and operated. These stressors impact every generation on a farm, including young children, adolescents, adults, and the aging population. No one is excluded from the impact of these pressures.

## Statistics

Rural Kansas is significantly affected by farm stress. Here's a closer look:

- In 2021, 60% of farmers and farm workers reported increased stress and mental health challenges compared to the previous year.
- 22% increase in social isolation from farmers was reported, which impacts farmers' mental health drastically.
- 60.3% of youth had some form of depression and didn't access treatment.
- The CDC, in 2017, found those in agriculture, farming, and forestry careers experience 5 times greater suicide rates than those in urban populations.
- Suicide is the 2nd leading cause of death in ages 10-14 and 25-35.
- Approximately 10% of all adults in Kansas seriously considered suicide in June 2023. Imagine 10% of your population - that's probably hundreds of people in your community, and likely you know one of them.
- In the most recent study of farmers and ag workers, 98% of the participants showed some level of depression.
- Suicide among farmers is explicitly 3.5 times higher than the national average of any other specific population.

## Warning Signs

- Saying things like "I wish I weren't here anymore," "I feel like living isn't worth it," and "I feel like I'm no help to anyone."
- Feeling like a burden to family and friends and feelings of hopelessness.
- Giving away meaningful items to loved ones and discussing the passing of finances or writing wills.
- Writing a suicide note or saying goodbye to loved ones.
- Mood changes, increasing depression, or long lasting sad mood.
- Thoughts of suicide or wanting to die.
- Changes in behavior, increased sleeping, loss of appetite, increased fatigue, or decreased ability to make decisions, concentrate or participate.

## What can you do if you or a loved one is struggling:

- Recognize that this can affect anyone in any age group.
- Reach out for support from family and friends and ask for help.
- Create a safe environment by avoiding lethal means or removing them from the home.
- Provide support and listen to those in need. Help them access the care they need and support them throughout treatment. Remind them they are loved and valuable.

## Let us help!

- Ag-aware/informed clinicians who are knowledgeable and appreciative of the farm/ranch culture.
- Offering remote care to remove barriers to distance and privacy.
- Providing care to all ages and groups, child therapy, adolescents, adults and couples.
- Income-based rates, and provide to families on any budget.
- Therapy, psychiatry, and community-based services available.
- Weekday, weekend, early morning, and late-night appointments to fit your schedule.

