

Introducing



Mental Health Support, Education and Community

The Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs (OMAFRA) has partnered with Canadian Mental Health Association (CMHA), Ontario, the Ontario Federation of Agriculture (OFA) and other mental health and agriculture sector experts, including the University of Guelph, to provide mental health initiatives specialized to support those in the agriculture sector.

The many constant demands, pressures and time constraints that come with farming can often result in farmers putting their work ahead of their well-being. In addition, living in a rural area and social stigma can make receiving treatment and accessing services even more challenging.

Now, with the **Farmer Wellness Initiative**, **The Guardian Network**, and **In the Know**, all partners are working to ensure the ongoing well-being of Ontario's farming community with a variety of accessible programs and resources.

The agricultural community plays a vital role in ensuring all Ontarians enjoy a healthy economy and local food security. So, we want to ensure Ontario's farmers are well supported.

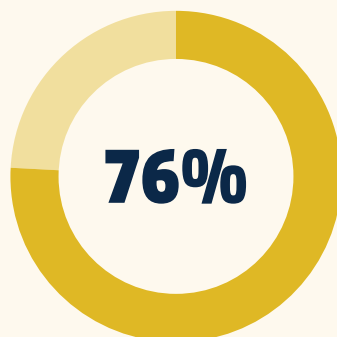
Through our suite of programs, supported by OMAFRA, The Canadian Agricultural Partnership, and other funders, Agriculture Wellness Ontario is bringing mental health education, counselling services and enhanced community support to farming communities across the province. Visit: [AgricultureWellnessOntario.ca](http://AgricultureWellnessOntario.ca)



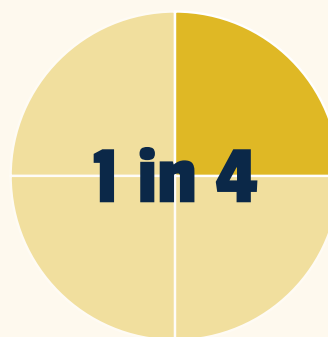
**GUARDIAN**  
Network



## We want to de-stigmatize asking for help.



\* of farmers experience moderate or high perceived stress.



farmers felt their life was not worth living.

# FARMER WELLNESS INITIATIVE

- Farmers across Ontario and family members working on the farm have access to free counselling.
- Access to counselling is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year, in English and French at 1-866-267-6255.
- Counsellors have received training to understand the unique needs of Ontario farmers.

Call 1-866-267-6255 anytime to receive free support.  
Visit: [FarmerWellnessInitiative.ca](http://FarmerWellnessInitiative.ca)

*Paid for in part by the governments of Canada and Ontario and through the Canadian Agricultural Partnership (the Partnership), a five-year federal-provincial-territorial initiative.*

## Our programs...

### Farmers feed Ontario. It is crucial we support Ontario's farmers.

- Farmers experience chronic stress more than the general population.
- Yet farmers are less likely to seek the help of professionals.
- Talking about mental health helps save lives.



## GUARDIAN Network

- The Guardian Network is a community-based volunteer suicide prevention program.
- A Guardian is an individual, over the age of 18, who is in contact with farmers through their work or place in their community and has successfully completed the training.
- Guardians are equipped with strategies and tools to identify the signs of mental distress, react to farmers at-risk, and connect individuals with appropriate mental health and crisis resources.

Sign up to become a Guardian in your community.  
Visit: [GuardianNetwork.ca](http://GuardianNetwork.ca)

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IN the KNOW

- In the Know is a mental health workshop designed specifically for farmers, their families and those who are involved in, or support the agriculture sector.
- It is a free, four-hour workshop using real-life examples from the farm.
- Participants cover topics of stress, depression, anxiety, substance use disorder, and how to start a conversation around mental well-being.

Attend or book a workshop for your group.  
Visit: [IntheKnowOntario.ca](http://IntheKnowOntario.ca)

*This project is funded in part by the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs.*

\*Source: Briana N. M. Hagen, Alex Sawatzky, Sherilee L. Harper, Terri L. O'Sullivan & Andria Jones-Bitton (2022) "Farmers Aren't into the Emotions and Things, Right?": A Qualitative Exploration of Motivations and Barriers for Mental Health Help-Seeking among Canadian Farmers, Journal of Agromedicine