



THE UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA  
Cooperative Extension

# Supporting Ag Producer Mental Health and Wellness

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Family, Consumer, and Health Sciences  
Coconino County Cooperative Extension



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Coconino County

## The Dirt

- Who is Cooperative Extension and what do we do?
- Define producer and differentiate it from farm worker
- What is farm stress and how is it impacting farmers and ranchers in rural AZ?
- What is Cooperative Extension doing in the Western US to address ag producer mental health?
- What can healthcare providers do to support ag producer mental health?
- What is the FarmResponse training from the AgriSafe Network?
  - Give away 20 scholarships!



# Arizona Cooperative Extension



- 1862 Land Grant Institution
- University of Arizona
  - Houses Cooperative Extension
- In every county in the state
- Bring the resources of the university to the people to improve lives
- Community outreach and education
  - ANR
  - 4H
  - FCHS



# About Me

- Gayle Gratop, Assistant Agent, Coconino County, Family, Consumer and Health Science
- AZ Rep for WRASAP
- Education: Environmental Studies, Production Horticulture, MS Ag Education, PhD Interdisciplinary Health (in progress)
- Managed growing operations in northern AZ since 2009 (mostly native plant production)
- Dissertation research is centered on farm stress and needs for female ag producers in AZ



# Who are agricultural producers?

- **Presentation will focus on ag producers:** “any person or legal entity engaged in the production of agricultural products—such as a farmer, rancher, or grower—who has a financial share in a crop or livestock and shares in the risk of producing them.”
- **Farmworker:** “any hired individual who performs agricultural employment, including migrant, seasonal, and hired family farm workers.”



# Agricultural Producers Play an Essential Role in the Health of Communities and Lands

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- ...and they face unique challenges
- Extreme Weather
- Policies
- Economics
- Working Conditions
- Access to Care
- Stigma



# Suicide is a Major Public Health Issue

**Producers in Arizona have 2.5 times the risk of suicide than non-producers**



## National and State Data

- Nationally, Agriculture is the occupation with the fifth highest suicide rate
  - Mining
  - Construction
  - Other Services
  - Arts, Entertainment, Recreation
  - Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing, Hunting
- In Arizona, our rates are 51.7 per 100,000, considerably higher than national CDC rates for the agriculture industry group (36.1 per 100,000)
- In the same period (2018-2022), the estimated rate per 100,000 was 20.2 for the overall Arizona population
- Arizona is ranked 50th of the states for providing access to mental health resources

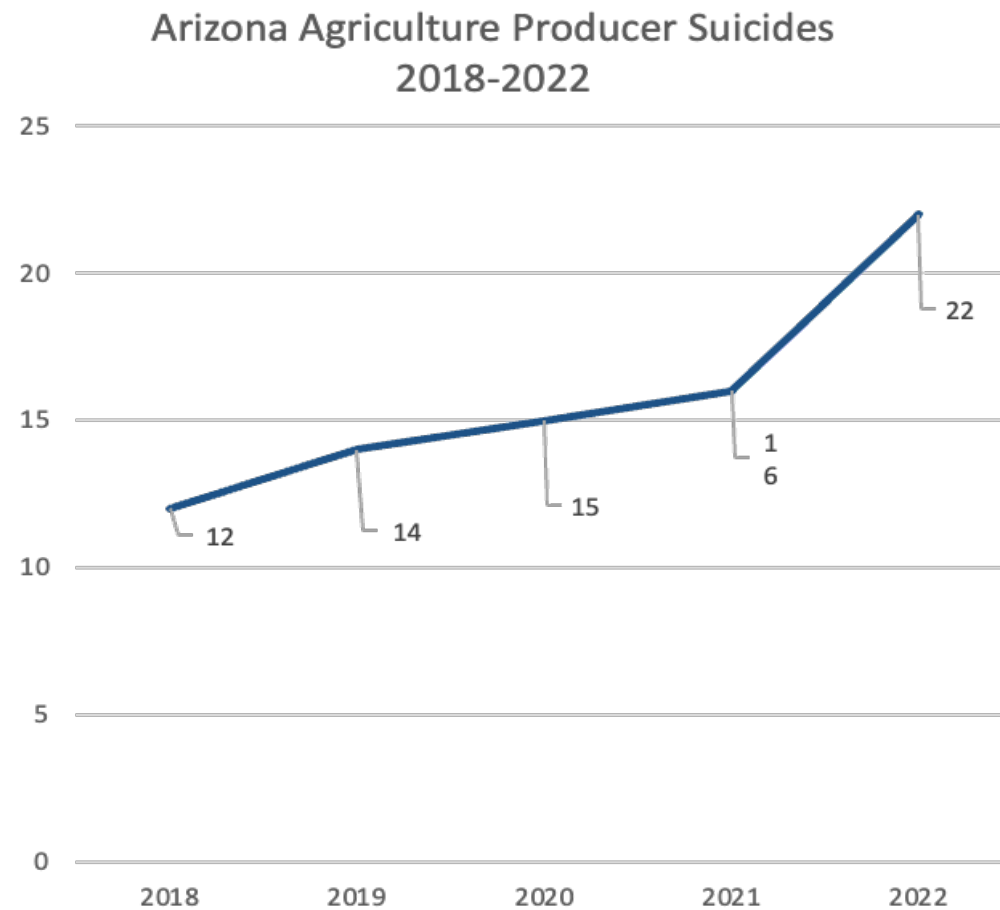


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# Stressors are Increasing

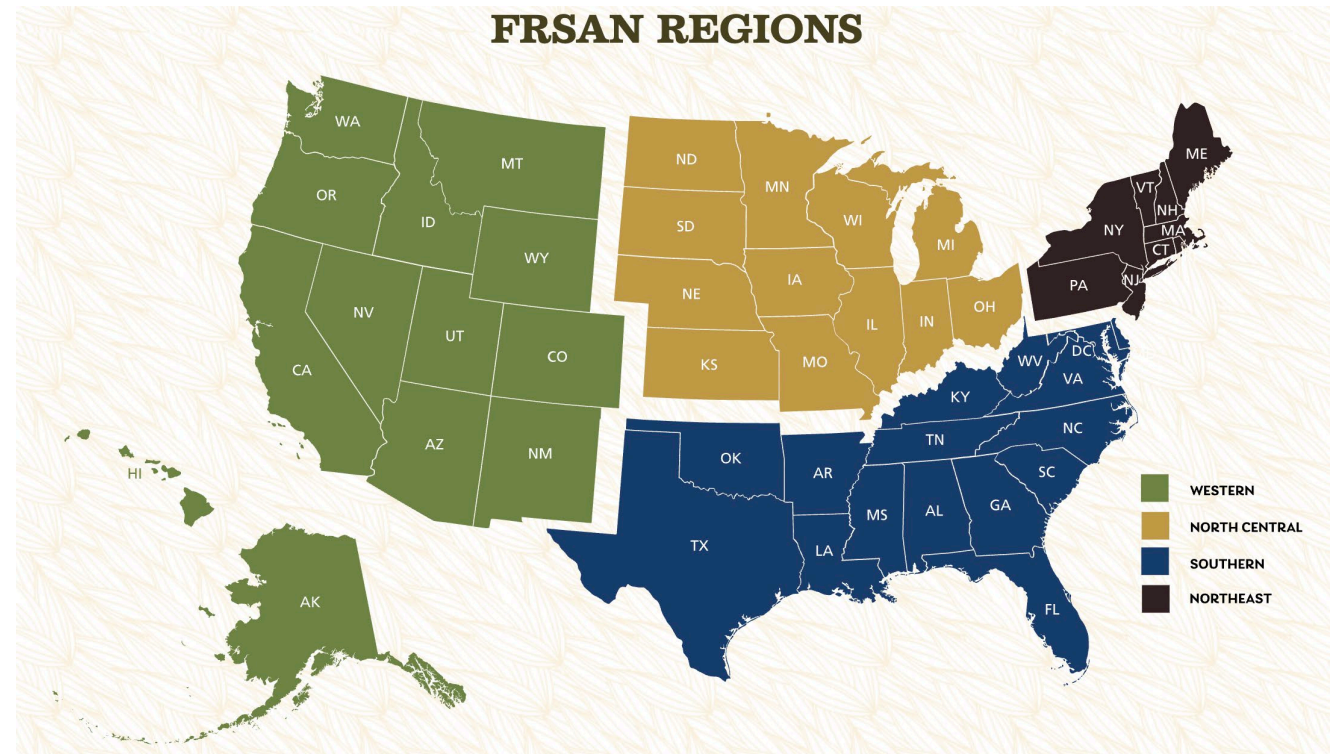
And they have an impact on mental wellness



ADHS Vital Records, special data pull 5-2024

# USDA: Farm and Ranch Stress Assistance Network (FRSAN 2019)

- Four regions awarded
- Three of four regional awards are Land Grant Institutions/Cooperative Extension



# Western Regional Agricultural Stress Assistance Program (WRASAP)

HOME ABOUT EVENTS CALENDAR RESOURCE CLEARINGHOUSE CONTACT

MEMBER LOGIN

2025-2021 MINI GRANTS

**WRASAP**  
Western Regional Agricultural  
Stress Assistance Program

**WE'RE HERE TO HELP**

We believe in working together to cultivate rural resilience for all, including farmers, ranchers, and agriculture workers as they navigate increasing stress.

ABOUT WRASAP RESOURCE CLEARINGHOUSE FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES



# WRASAP Resources for Ag workers and Producers

- Free online trainings (QPR for Ag) in English and Spanish
- Quarterly Meetings: Open to the Public (with Spanish interpretation)
- Stories from Producers Across the West
- Mini Grants
- Clearing house (resources for producers)
- Farm Aid Resources
- Research: What are the major stressors impacting Western Ag Producers and what are your needed resources



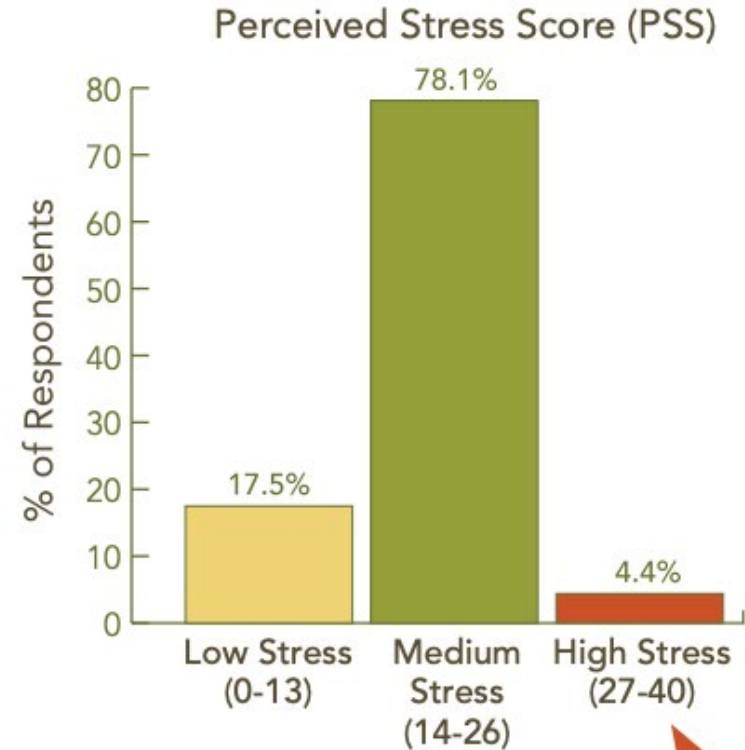
## WRASAP Baseline Data: 2021 (producers)

### Perceived Stress Scale Low, Medium, and High Stress

- Women averaged a higher PSS Score

### Top Stressors

1. Workload
2. Lack of time
3. Financial worries



Females averaged a higher PSS score than males (19.3 and 17.6 respectively)

Those who reported a high PSS responded they would be most interested to learn about financial, mental health, and problem solving topics to help manage/cope with stress.



# What are we doing in AZ?

- Building and Strengthening Partnerships: Agriculture and Rural Mental Health Collaborative
- Research
  - Working directly with **PRODUCERS**
- Tribal ag (next WRASAP \$\$)
- AgriStress Helpline to AZ
- 10 FarmResponse scholarships awarded to crisis unit in rural counties (AZFB)
- 20 FarmResponse scholarships through WRASAP!



# 2026 International Year of the Woman Farmer



GW25-002  
GROW: Ground Resilient &  
Optimistic Women  
Coping with stress on the farm to  
foster resilience



**Are you a woman in Arizona  
agriculture who has  
experienced stress from  
farming or ranching?  
We want to hear from you!**

**Eligible study  
participants will  
receive \$50 in  
Amazon gift  
cards**

**Help shape future  
support for  
women in  
agriculture**

**Scan QR Code or  
use link to apply**  
[bit.ly/women-ag-az-consent](https://bit.ly/women-ag-az-consent)



**What to expect?  
We will conduct 30  
90-minute interviews  
across the state on  
your farm or ranch**



This research has been approved by  
Northern Arizona University IRB

**Questions? Contact Gayle Gratop, Assistant Agent, UA Coconino Cooperative Extension  
[gaylejennifer2@arizona.edu](mailto:gaylejennifer2@arizona.edu) or (928) 773-6112**

# Why Women in Ag?

- **2026 International Year of the Woman Farmer!**
  - Celebrate women's roles in agriculture while addressing social and economic challenges worldwide
- 48% of Arizona's producers are women (USDA NASS, 2022)
- One of the highest percentages of female producers in the US- tied with AK
- 36% is the national average (USDA NASS, 2022)
  - Only 8% reported being run entirely by women (USDA NASS, 2022)



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# Why is this Important?

- Female producers remain an understudied population in terms of farm stress and as “the farmer” (Roy et al., 2025; Wheeler and Nye, 2025; Reed and Claunch, 2020; Yazd et al. 2019)
- Women in ag experience higher burnout than males (O’Shaughnessy et al., 2022)
- Women in farm households are at greater risk for depression than men (Reed and Claunch, 2020)
- Female farmers can experience systemic barriers in agriculture i.e., wage gaps, limited access to land, resources, and programs (Proctor et al., 2025; Sachs et al., 2016; Barbercheck et al., 2009)



# AgriStress Helpline



- Free and confidential crisis and support helpline
- Call or text 24/7
- 160 different languages
- Trained professionals to help you find mental health and agricultural resources in your area



**LONG HOURS,  
TOUGH DAYS**

**Don't carry the load alone.**

**AgriStress  
HELPLINE<sup>®</sup>**  
for Arizona

833.897.2474  
call or text



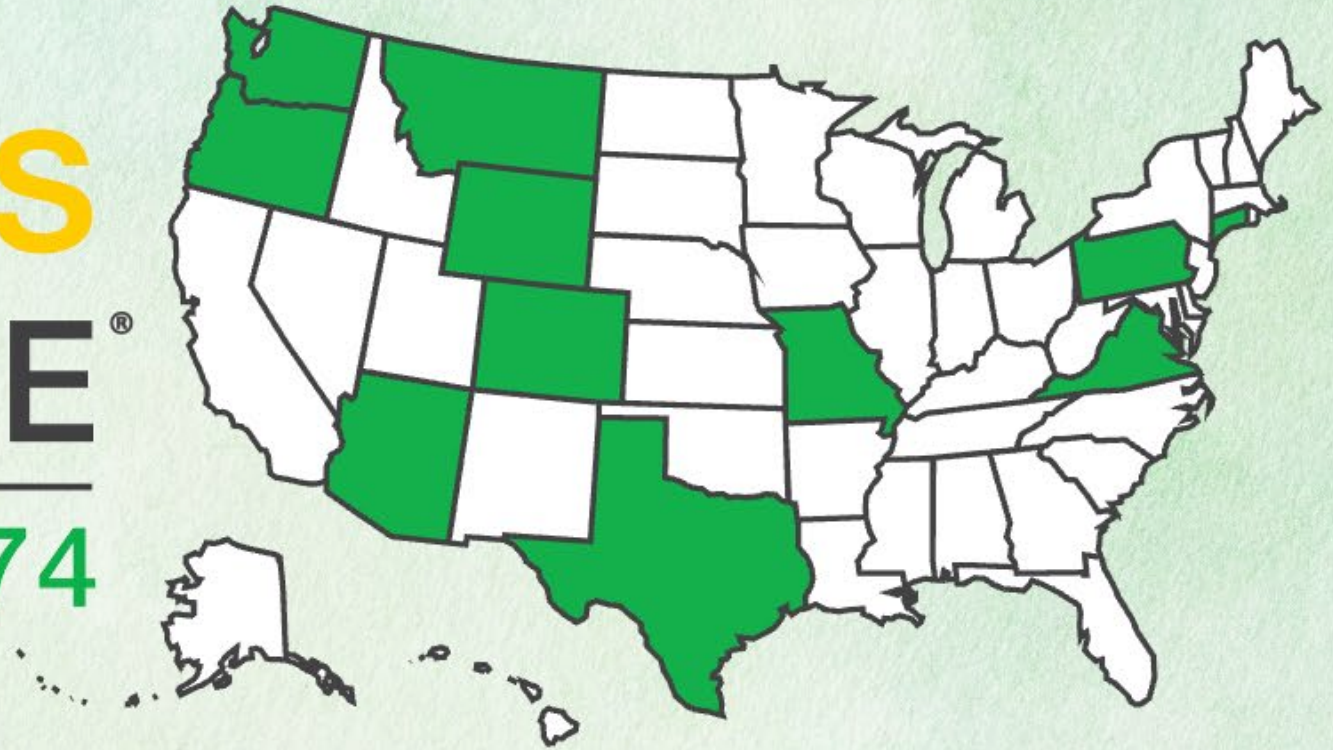
Scan the code to  
save the number

# AgriStress HELPLINE<sup>®</sup>



833.897.2474

*call or text*



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Now available in: AZ, CO, CT, MO, MT, OR, PA, TX, VA, WA, and WY!



Scan to Save the  
Number

1-833-897-2474



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# Agriculture is present in every AZ county especially in rural areas

- Many Arizona agricultural producers live and work in rural communities where healthcare access can be limited.
- Other barriers:
  - Time
  - Distance
  - Stigma
  - Lack of provider understanding of agricultural life

## ARIZONA AGRICULTURE BY COUNTY

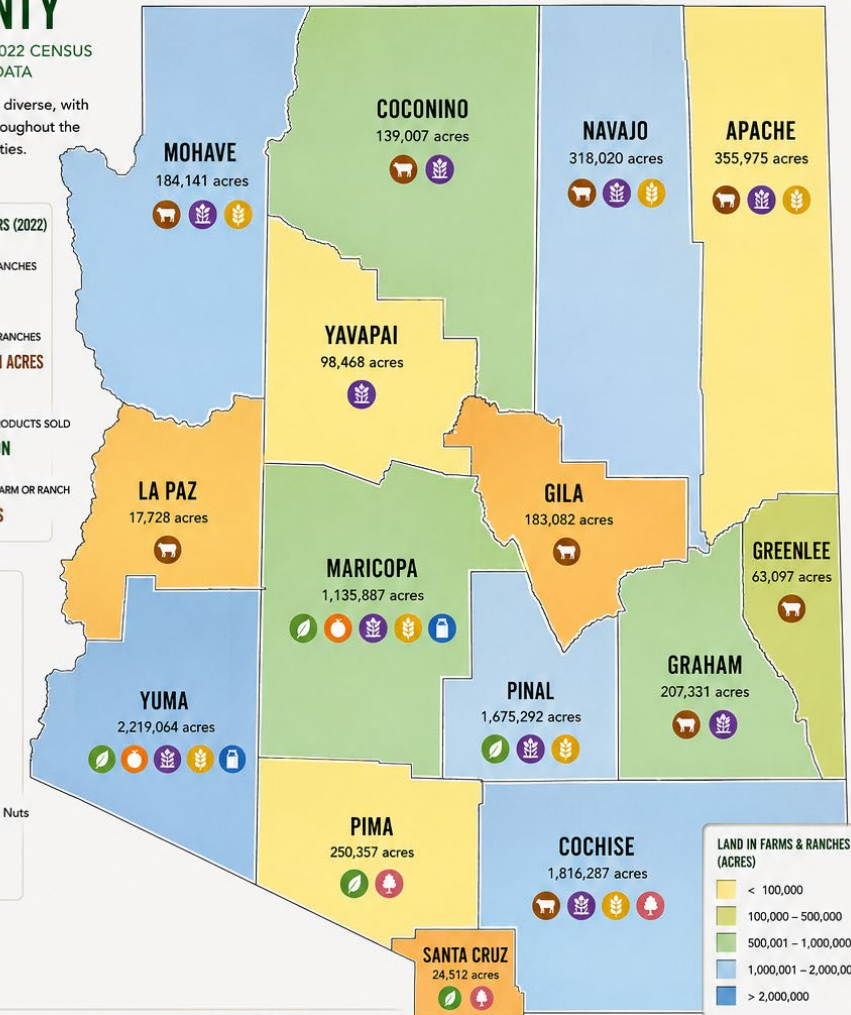
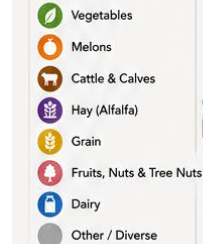
BASED ON AZFB 2022 CENSUS OF AGRICULTURE DATA

Arizona agriculture is diverse, with producers located throughout the state's rural communities.

### ARIZONA BY THE NUMBERS (2022)



### TOP COMMODITIES BY COUNTY



### COUNTY HIGHLIGHTS



# Culturally Responsive Care

- Culturally responsive care for agricultural communities means
  - recognizing occupational risks,
  - rural lifestyles,
  - and the unique stressors facing producers and their families.
- Providers who understand and respect ag way of life are better equipped
  - to support the long-term health, wellbeing, and sustainability of Arizona's rural producers and communities.

## The Total Farmer Health® Model

Healthy Mind + Healthy Body = *Total Farmer Health*®





# FarmResponse

## Online Learning

FarmResponse® is a 3.5-hour continuing education module developed by national experts from the AgriStress Response Network.



## Free Training Opportunity for Qualifying Professionals:

If you live or are licensed to practice in the following states, you may be eligible to take FarmResponse for **FREE**.

AgriSafe's **FarmResponse** course provides the full range of competencies necessary to provide appropriate mental healthcare for agricultural producers and their families. This knowledge is critical for a wide range of healthcare professionals to effectively care for a farmer's total health.

### The topics covered in *FarmResponse* include:

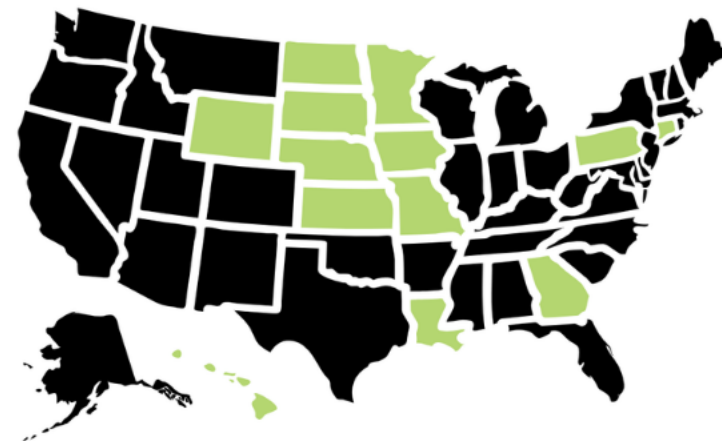
- The Total Farmer Health Model
- AgriBusiness Factors Impacting Mental Well-Being
- Agriculture Work Factors
- Family Dynamics
- Agrarian Culture and Values
- Special Populations
- US Agricultural Producer Demographics
- Agricultural Community Healthcare Challenges
- Opioids and Alcohol Issues in Agriculture
- Suicide and Agriculture
- Resources and Referrals



Learners can earn a digital badge to acknowledge their accomplishment and dedication to serving the unique healthcare needs of the agricultural community!



- Connecticut
- Georgia
- Hawaii
- Iowa
- Kansas
- Louisiana
- Minnesota
- Missouri
- Nebraska
- North Dakota
- South Dakota
- Wyoming



If you do not reside in one of these states the course fee for FarmResponse is \$150.

[agrisafe.org/farm-response](http://agrisafe.org/farm-response)



Scan the QR code for FarmResponse program details!

**Continuing education credits** are available for nurses, physicians, psychologists, licensed professional counselors, community health workers, occupational therapists, veterinarians, veterinary technicians, and other professionals.

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# Questions? Your Feedback Counts!

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