

Is farming hard?

Quotes from farmers across the Western US:

"It's so hard. It's physical labor that is constant."

"I used to have balanced time with my family, but now I find myself absorbed with the farm."

"There's a lot of pressure to be efficient in what we do. Our survival is very much tied to the efficiency of our labor."

"My husband was in a horse accident. Working with animals, there's always that possibility."

"During freezes or hails, in one evening our income can evaporate and our business plan switches from growth mode to survival mode. It may take several years to recover from a serious crop loss."

"It was really about how to survive, keep producing, and keeping feelings together."

"We put so much time and effort that we cannot anymore, it's hard."

"Counseling could be helpful...just if you were sitting down with someone or even if it was over telehealth, like Zoom. Just to talk basically, any type of counseling."

"In times of need, support from not only family members, but from the community is very important."



WSU Extension Associate Faculty member, Don McMoran, was a preliminary recipient of the Joe Shelton Memorial Award from Broetje Family Trust. Due to success of Free Voucher Programs in other states and the generosity of this award, Don recommended that Washington State also operate a Free Voucher Program, reaching out to farmers/farm workers and their families to offer free therapy in a way that is not burdensome, complicated, or intrusive, and is flexible enough to fit into the busy unpredictable schedule of farmers.

We are thankful to the WSU psych clinic who is able to provide this service in honor of Joe Shelton, a passionate farmer who was always there to serve others who needed it.

"The Joe D. Shelton Memorial Award honors the life and teachings of Joe Shelton, a gifted farmer and leader who devoted his life to serving others at Broetje Orchards. Joe served with humility and joy, and he held a deep respect for the land and all those who worked there. He loved his family, being out in nature, and farming. He believed that everyone deserved an opportunity to work so that children could be raised in healthy, thriving communities. We announce this annual award on May 12, Joe's birthday, as a celebration of his life and legacy. Each year, this award is granted to organizations exemplifying Joe's vision and values as a servant leader, giving special focus to the health and wellbeing of agricultural and Native communities, and those who live close to the land."

<https://broetjefamilytrust.org/philanthropy/joe-d-shelton-memorial-award/>



WSU Agricultural Suicide Prevention Pilot Program is funded through the State of Washington, Department of Health under the provision of House Bill 2671.

Supporting Agencies



WSU EXTENSION
Skagit County

WSU Extension programs and employment are available to all without discrimination. Evidence of noncompliance may be reported through your local WSU Extension Office.



Washington's Free Farm Stress Counseling Voucher Program

What is the voucher program?

Does life just not seem to get better?

Do you wish you could go back to how you used to be?

Farmers, ranchers, farmworkers, and their families, continue to meet the onslaught of heavy demands that never seem to stop. Many of us have experienced a crisis in the last year, or we are currently in a crisis.

The voucher program offers 6 free online sessions with a trained psychologist, to help you get where you want to be. Back on the farm, back with your family, back in the saddle.

Meet Conny

Hi, my name is Conny Kirchhoff (PhD), I am a licensed Psychologist in WA and ID and a faculty member at the psychology department at WSU in Pullman.

I partnered up with Farm Response in the hopes of being able to serve farmers and their families in navigating stress, providing assistance in overcoming adversity, and support community. I would love to answer any questions you might have and look forward to working with you.



How To Access the Voucher Program

1. Call the WSU Psychology Clinic at **(509) 335-3587**.
2. Tell them you are calling to participate in the Farm Stress Counseling Voucher Program. Ask for Conny.
3. To set up an appointment, the Clinic will ask for:
 - Name -Phone Number -Email

Here's what to expect once you call:

- The Clinic will ask you to complete intake paperwork before you have your first session: <https://psychologyclinic.wsu.edu/>
- If you don't have internet access, the Clinic can mail you the intake paperwork, or you can go in-person.
- For help filling out paperwork or for any questions, you can contact:

WSU Psychology Clinic

509-335-3587 or psychology.clinic@wsu.edu

The Farm Aid Hotline

1-800-FARMAID (1-800-327-6243)

Chad Reznicek, Farm Stress Navigator:

chad.reznicek@colostate.edu or 970-744-9011

Want to know more about the Voucher Program? Check out our website!

<https://extension.wsu.edu/skagit/free-therapy-voucher-program/>



Common Questions

Who is eligible?

Farmers, ranchers, farmworkers, and their families.

What would a typical session look like?

Each session is 50 - 60 minutes and is held over zoom. This is a cooperative process and will naturally evolve to specifically fit with what works best for you.

How can a psychologist help me with my farm stress?

Stress is universally felt by all people. Psychologists have a deep understanding of the brain and have a plethora of tools to manage and navigate difficult feelings that don't seem to go away. Even just having a caring person listen to your pain no one else can see, can feel like lifting off a heavy burden. Psychologists are here to listen and can help you get to a better place.

How can I make this work with my farm schedule?

We have flexible scheduling hours, and because the sessions are over zoom, they can take place wherever you have internet access. Bring your laptop or phone to the kitchen, outside in the field during lunch hour, or have sessions in the privacy of your own car.

I have concerns about my privacy.

All therapists are legally and ethically bound to keep their sessions confidential. The WSU Psychology Clinic does not disclose a client's personal information, not even to the Farm Stress program, without written consent unless the law requires or permits them to do so.

What if I can't continue my sessions?

There are 6 free sessions available to you whenever you need them. You are free to discontinue your sessions for any reason at any time.