

# RAISING HOPE

CARERC and SCAHIP are both part of a statewide-Kentucky partnership called Raising Hope. Its mission is to develop community-based programming, education, communication and support systems informed by local voices to support the mental health of our farmers and farm families through focus on the reduction of stress, depression, and suicide rates of our agricultural community members.

Additional partners on this initiative include the Kentucky Cabinet of Health and Family Services, the Kentucky Department of Agriculture, the Kentucky Injury Prevention and Research Center, as well as the University of Louisville, Western Kentucky University and Murray State University.

## CONTACT US

*We would be happy to bring our programming to your community!*

<https://www.uky.edu/scahip/>  
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Should you or someone you know be in crisis, please contact the National Suicide Prevention Hotline at 800-273-8255.

## AGRICULTURAL COMMUNITY MEMBER MENTAL HEALTH

Research & Initiatives



**SOUTHEAST  CENTER**  
FOR AGRICULTURAL HEALTH AND INJURY PREVENTION

  
Central  
Appalachian  
Regional **ERC**

## FARMER MENTAL HEALTH

As of 2017, 3.4 million farmers were working in the U.S. Dangerous as farming is for occupational injury and fatality, agriculture is also considered to have one of the highest rates of deaths by suicide. Key factors that contribute to these rates include financial losses, chronic illness or pain, a sense of work-life imbalance, and/or the physical or social barriers to access mental health services.

Even if a farmer attempts to seek care, help may not be available. In 2018, the federal Substance Abuse & Mental Health Services Administration reported that 60-80% of visits to healthcare providers in the U.S. are related to stress. Rural areas, where most farms are located, contain 85% of the 1,669 federally-designated mental health professional shortage areas. Therefore, farmers and their families who may be among those with great need are going without crucial mental health services.

## REDUCING STIGMA

In a National Poll conducted by the American Farm Bureau Federation in 2019, a strong majority of rural adults (91%) said mental health is important to them and/or their family. A majority of farmers/farmworkers thought that the media (72%), people in their local community (58%), and their friends (56%) attach at least a fair amount of stigma to mental health. Three in four rural adults say it is important to reduce stigma about mental health in the agriculture community.

## ABOUT US

The Southeast Center for Agricultural Health and Injury Prevention (SCAHIP) and Central Appalachian Regional Education and Research Center (CARERC) are two NIOSH/CDC funded centers in the College of Agriculture, Food and Environment at the University of Kentucky. The mission of both centers is to address occupational safety and health through education, research, and outreach. For the past two years, the Centers have been engaged in efforts to develop community-based support systems informed by local voices to improve farmer emotional health and well-being.

## INITIATIVES

**Agricultural Community OPR for Farmers and Farm Families Training** is a 1.5-hour program which pairs the Question-Persuade-Refer suicide prevention training with an introduction to agricultural community stressors, as well as discussion of barriers and cues to prompt mental healthcare-seeking behavior among farmers and farm families in rural communities.

Developed by agricultural community members, researchers, and health care practitioners across the state, the program has trained 57 trainers and 725 participants as of October 2021. Funding for the program has been provided by the Centers, Agrisafe as part of the South-Farm & Ranch Stress Assistance Network program from USDA, and the General Fund appropriation to support the Kentucky Rural Mental Health and Suicide Prevention pilot program.

**Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training (ASIST)** is a 2-day program which teaches participants how to prevent suicide by recognizing signs, providing a skilled intervention, and developing a safety plan to keep someone alive.

The Centers are also developing a **progressive web toolkit** designed to improve agricultural community member mental well-being.