

Delivering Mental Health Services In Rural Communities

BACKGROUND

Professionals providing mental health and well-being services in rural and farming communities are often aware of the stressors farmers encounter¹

These include:



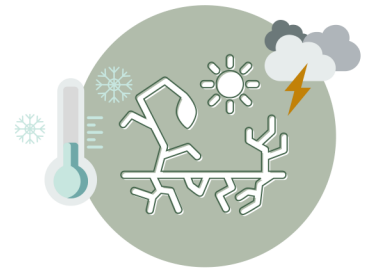
distance to services



physical strains due to heavy work and long hours



financial pressures



volatile weather patterns

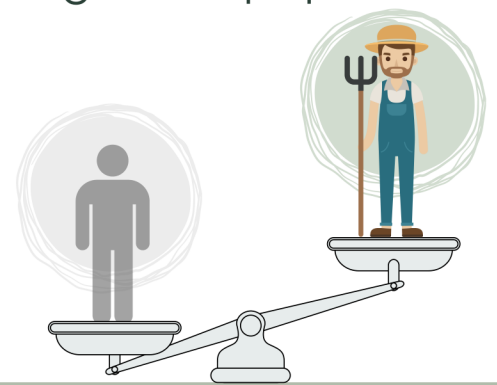
According to a recent national survey, Canadian farmers experience **stress**, **anxiety**, and **depression** at greater levels than the general population⁶



58% reported **anxiety**

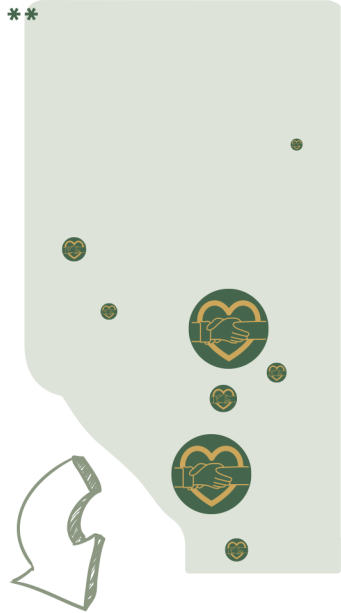
45% reported **stress**

35% reported **depression**



Despite these struggles, those in rural and farming communities often face a number of barriers to seeking help for their mental health

Urban vs. Rural Accessibility



There are relatively few psychologists providing mental health services in rural areas compared to urban areas in Canada⁶

Many Canadian farmers:

are unaware of available mental health and community services⁵

do not access them due to accessibility or stigma⁵

face delays and unreimbursed costs when they do seek help⁵

In Alberta, there are a range of community-based services and businesses that provide mental health support to clients in rural areas

Provincial Needs Assessment Findings⁷

- some services or businesses were able to successfully engage with individuals in the farming community
- these services and programs were adapted in ways to better address the needs of those in farming communities

However, **what they modified** and **the perceived needs of those in farming communities** remain unclear

PURPOSE

The purpose of this study is to explore the perspectives of those providing community-based programs or services to farmers, farm families, and individuals working in agriculture

Goal: to develop a set of best practices to aid in the development of programs or services that support the mental health and well-being of those in farming communities in Alberta

METHOD

Participants

Service providers for farming communities in Alberta; individuals working in agriculture in rural AB

Procedure

1-1 interviews, audio recorded and transcribed verbatim

Data Analysis

Data will be thematically analysed to identify themes and ideas

**This map is an artistic representation solely intended to contrast the difference in accessibility for rural vs. urban mental health services in Alberta and is not a realistic depiction of actual mental services locations

1 (Cole & Bondy, 2019)
2 (Kallioniemi et al., 2016; Logreth, 2016) (2)
3 (Keamey et al., 2014; Truchot & Andela, 2018) (3)
4 (Hayes et al., 2018; Kolstrup et al., 2013) (4)
5 (Gregoire, 2002; Hagen et al., 2022)
6 (Jones-Bitton et al., 2020)
7 (Agricultural Research and Extension Council of Alberta, 2022)