

SIGNS OF STRESS

Some common signs of distress are:

- Irritability and anger
- Feelings of anxiety & worry
- Headaches or gastrointestinal complaints
- Increased risk-taking behavior
- Changes in eating & sleep habits
- Increased alcohol or drug use
- Forgetfulness
- Fatigue
- Sense of helplessness
- Lack of concentration
- Avoidance or denial
- Sadness

Farmers and their families should remind themselves that these are common stress reactions and that It is important to recognize that these are normal responses to a difficult situation.

Easing Disaster-Related Stress

Talk to someone and seek professional help for disaster-related stress. The following are ways to ease disaster-related stress:

- Talk with someone about your feelings - anger, sorrow, and other emotions - even though it may be difficult.
- Seek help from professional counselors who deal with post-disaster stress.
- Do not hold yourself responsible for the disastrous event or be frustrated because you feel you cannot help directly in the rescue work.
- Take steps to promote your own physical and emotional healing by healthy eating, rest, exercise, relaxation, and meditation.
- Maintain a normal family and daily routine, limiting demanding responsibilities on yourself and your family.
- Spend time with family and friends.
- Participate in memorials.
- Use existing support groups of family, friends, and religious institutions.

If any of the following symptoms persist or begin to increasingly difficult to deal with, you may need to seek assistance:

- Headaches
- Lack of appetite
- Impatience
- Frustration
- Difficulty making decisions
- Frequent angry blow-ups
- Difficulty sleeping
- Inability to concentrate
- An increase in smoking and/or substance use
- Trouble adapting to changing circumstances
- Isolation from friends and/or family
- Difficulty in communicating needs

If you or a family member experiences these persistent symptoms, please seek assistance from you local community mental health center. They can help in determining eligibility for services