

Stress can impact all aspects of a farmer's life. Symptoms of stress can differ from person to person. It is important to recognize when you are feeling stressed before the stress becomes chronic. From this list, how many symptoms are you currently experiencing?

## Cognitive Symptoms

- Forgetfulness
- Racing thoughts, lacks focus
- Constant worrying
- Poor judgment
- Pessimistic

## Emotional Symptoms

- Moodiness, Irritability
- Anger
- Feeling overwhelmed, lacking control
- Difficulties relaxing, restless
- Loneliness, avoidance
- Feeling worthless, hopeless
- Low self-esteem
- Anxiety, panic

## Physical Symptoms

- Lethargic, body fatigue, lack of energy
- Headaches
- Aches and pains, tightness in muscles
- Chest pain, rapid heartbeat, short breathing
- Gastrointestinal issues (upset stomach, diarrhea, constipation, nausea)
- Dry mouth, difficulties swallowing
- Too much sleep or too little sleep
- Frequent colds or infections
- Loss of interest in activities, sex
- Nervousness, anxiety
- Clenched jaw, grinding teeth

## Behavioral Symptoms

- Sleeping too much or too little
- Eating too much or too little
- Procrastination
- Increased use of alcohol, drugs, or cigarettes
- Nervous behaviors – nail biting, fidgeting, pacing

# Tips to Manage Your Stress

Once you have identified your symptoms of stress, it is important to try different strategies to manage your stress. Here are some tips to help decrease stress:

**1**

## **Eat Healthy.**

(fruits, vegetable, whole grains, lowfat dairy, and lean protein)

**2**

## **Try to keep a positive attitude.**

You cannot control everything, but you can control how you respond.

**3**

## **Utilize effective time management.**

By managing your time wisely, you may feel less overwhelmed.

**4**

## **Laugh.**

The act of laughing can help ward off stress.

**5**

## **Try to obtain enough rest and sleep.**

**6**

## **Practice breathing and find inner peace.**

Learn and practice relaxation techniques such as mindfulness or yoga. A mindfulness app might work for you (e.g. Headspace, Smiling Mind, iMindfulness, Mindfulness Daily).

**7**

## **Engage in hobbies or interests.**

Your stress levels will be high if you do not make time to have fun.

**8**

## **Politely stand up for yourself.**

Do not become angry or passive; rather, thoughtfully share your feelings, opinions, and beliefs.

**9**

## **Avoid relying upon alcohol, drugs or food to help you feel more relaxed.**

**10**

## **Exercise regularly.**

Try to incorporate exercise into your daily routine.

**11**

## **Talk with a counselor.**

Visit <http://www.helplinecenter.org> or dial **211** to access community resources. For immediate assistance with mental health concerns or suicidal thoughts, please call **1-800-273-8255**.

Avera Farm and Rural Stress hotline - **1-800-691-4336**

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