

let's talk

managing stress during drought

Rural communities are adaptable and resourceful with people relying on being able to solve problems and overcome challenges. However, in drought or dry conditions, there are often factors that are out of our control and ongoing uncertainty, which can cause significant stress. During these times, it's important to look after our mental health to ensure we can make clear decisions and cope with other stressors in life.

Signs that someone may be stressed:

- Anger or irritability
- Worry or nervousness
- Loss of concentration
- Loss of interest
- Low energy
- Social withdrawal
- Relationship issues
- Unusual headaches and body aches
- Changes in sleeping and eating patterns
- Increased drug or alcohol use

When someone is under prolonged stress, they may have difficulty making decisions regarding their finances, production or relationships. If someone is showing signs of being stressed, it's important to talk about it and take action as soon as possible.

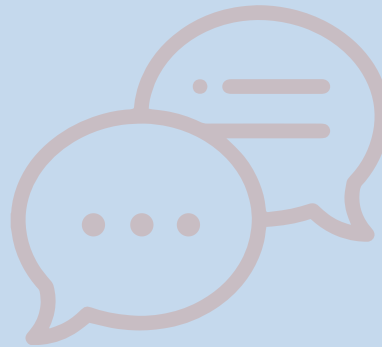
In tough times we also need to remember to look after ourselves. Doing things daily to take care of yourself is important, as it will increase your capacity to deal with stress.

Think about steps and decisions you will make as circumstances change. This could include when to act, your succession or exit plan, or wellbeing plan. Having a plan set early can help with decision making when things get tough or stressful. Utilise your networks and seek advice from professionals to make more informed decisions.

When having a conversation:

Chat to the person in a comfortable place about what you have noticed and why you are concerned. You do not need to fix their problems, just listen to their concerns and reassure the person that there is help available.

“I haven't seen you around much lately, ...what's been happening?”



“Things have been tough, how are you coping?”

“There's been a lot going on, how are you managing?”

“I've noticed that..., how are you going?”

Tips for looking after yourself

- Try to have some time out.
- Do things you enjoy.
- Keep in touch with family, friends and neighbours.
- Eat well, get quality sleep and use alcohol in moderation.
- Get help early if you're not feeling your best self.

How to take action...

If you're not sure where to start or want some advice on the best option for you, having a chat to your nearest Rural Adversity Mental Health Program (RAMHP) Coordinator can help. We live and work right across NSW and know all about local and online support options that might benefit you.



Find your local Coordinator:

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GP – Contact a General Practitioner for initial support and referral options.

NSW Mental Health Line – 1800 011 511
24/7 telephone line providing advice and referral.

Lifeline – 13 11 14, www.lifeline.org.au
24/7 confidential telephone line for crisis support.

Health Direct – www.healthdirect.gov.au
Look up health services in your area.

Suicide Call Back Service – 1300 659 467
www.suicidecallbackservice.org.au
24/7 telephone line for anyone affected by suicide.

Alcohol Drug Information Service – 1800 250 015
www.yourroom.health.nsw.gov.au/webchat
24/7 confidential telephone line providing advice, referral and support.

Head to Health – www.headtohealth.gov.au
Find Australian mental health services and resources.

Further drought support:



DPI Drought Hub – www.droughthub.nsw.gov.au
Provides information on services and supports available to prepare for, manage and recover from drought.

DPI Rural Recovery Support Service:
Providing a single point of contact for information and referrals for primary producers and landholders impacted by natural disasters.
General enquiries to 0448 077 684 or email:
flood.recovery@dpi.nsw.gov.au

Local Land Service – 1300 795 299
www.lls.nsw.gov.au
Provides services and knowledge in regards to agricultural production, animal health, pest and disease management and environmental threats.

NSW Rural Assistance Authority – 1800 678 593
www.raa.nsw.gov.au
Provides tailored access to loans, grants, rebates and subsidies for primary producers and small business operators.

Rural Financial Counselling Service – 1800 686 175
Provides free information and assistance on financial position, budgets and submitting applications to primary producers, fishers and small rural businesses.

Farmer Assistance Hotline – 13 23 16
Provides information and advice to Australian farmers and their partners about the Farm Household Allowance.

Business Connect – www.service.nsw.gov.au/business/business-connect
Provides free tailored business advice in one-on-one sessions. Topics include business planning, marketing and cash flow.

If you or someone else is in immediate danger call 000 or go to your nearest hospital emergency department.



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