



IFA

YOUR ASSOCIATION.
YOUR VOICE.

Dealing with Stress

The Irish Farmers' Association



An Roinn Talmhaíochta,
Bia agus Mara
Department of Agriculture,
Food and the Marine

Message from IFA Farm Family & Social Affairs Committee

As the saying goes “health is wealth” and it is important that we value and protect our health.

It can be difficult to prioritise health, particularly in times of change, when more and more is being asked of us as farmers. But it is in such times that it is even more important that we take steps to reduce stress, look after our physical and mental health and have access to quality and trustworthy information and services.

Looking after ones’ health and well-being should always be the number one priority. Just as physical fitness helps our bodies to stay strong, mental fitness helps us to achieve and sustain a state of good mental health. The two go hand in hand.



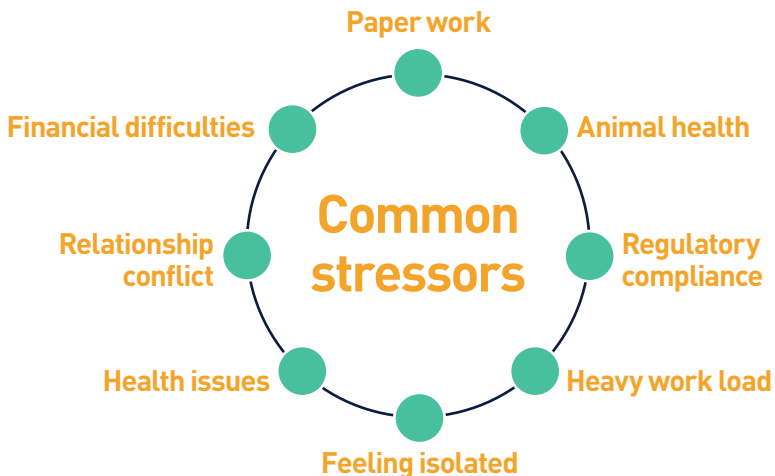
Alice Doye

Chair, IFA Farm Family & Social Affairs Committee.

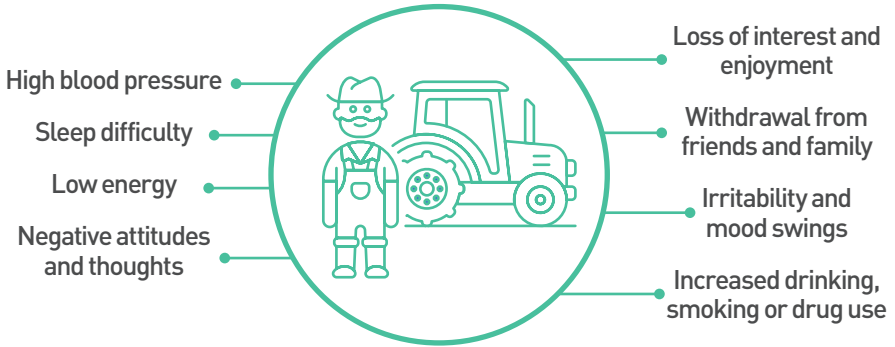
What is stress?



Stress is your body’s way of responding to any kind of demand that makes you feel threatened or upsets your wellbeing. Beyond a certain point, stress overload can cause damage to your physical and mental health. It may impact on your mood, your productivity, your relationships and your quality of life. Persistent high levels of stress can increase the risk of developing mental health problems such as depression and anxiety. However, it is important to know that stress can also motivate us to make changes and get things done.



Signs of stress include:



4

Four Steps to Self-Care and Coping with Stress

You can take positive steps to manage stress at home and on the farm, with support from those around you.



1. Connect with others

Reach out to family and friends for support. Connecting with others has a positive impact on mental health.



2. Manage your time

Time management and taking regular breaks is important to maintain the balance between work life and personal life.



3. Eat well and stay active

A healthy, well-balanced diet and regular exercise can help us think clearly, feel more alert and regulate stress levels.



4. Switch off, relax and get enough sleep

A regular sleep routine improves concentration, regulates mood, and improves your ability to make decisions. You are a better problem solver and are better able to cope with stress when you are well-rested.

Useful Contacts & Supports

The services listed below have experience in helping people deal with stress and other mental health problems.

- **Your local GP** should be your first point of contact.
- **Samaritans** 116 123 (24/7) provides support to people in emotional distress or at risk of suicide, if you need advice or specialist support for a specific issue Samaritans will redirect you to the relevant contacts.
- **Text about It 50808** is a free, anonymous, 24/7 messaging service providing everything from a calming chat to immediate support. www.text50808.ie
- **Your Mental Health** 1800 111 888 (24/7) provides information on support services near you that have been vetted by the HSE National Suicide Prevention Office. See www.yourmentalhealth.ie for online resources.
- **Pieta** 1800 247 247 or Text HELP to 51444 (24/7) is a crisis helpline if you or someone you know is in crisis experiencing suicidal ideation, engaging in self-harm, or have been bereaved by suicide. To make an appointment call 0818 111 126, no referral needed.
- **Mental Health Ireland** aims to promote positive mental health and wellbeing for all individuals and communities and to support people with lived experience of mental health challenges in their recovery, bringing practical expression to national policy objectives. www.mentalhealthireland.ie/your-mental-health/farming-resilience/

If you are struggling with financial issues, you can get impartial advice from MABS the Money Advice and Budgeting Service on the MABS helpline 0818 07 2000 which is available Mon-Fri 9am-8pm. MABS will work with you to find a solution.

IFA operates a confidential debt support helpline to assist farmers with financial difficulties. You can contact 1890 924 853 for support and advice.

