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Tough Times

These are certainly tough times in Nebraska, even before the natural disasters occurred.

At Nebraska Extension, we are working around the clock to address or contribute to issues with crops and property, care of pets and livestock, housing problems, disposal of damaged items, contaminated wells, insurance, financial assistance, salvaging items, food safety, overall safety, and mental wellness.

That last one on the list is easy to overlook.

We are expected to be “Nebraska Strong”, but perhaps being Nebraska Strong also means that we have the strength to reach out for help when it is needed.

Farmers and ranchers know the importance of planning and talking about their financial health to bankers, financial planners, spouses, etc., but might not realize how important it is to spend time on their mental wellness. One program addressing this issue is called **Wellness in Tough Times**, available for farm and ranch families. Participants learn how to recognize the signs and symptoms of stress, understand the role stress plays in our lives, and collect strategies and resources to manage stress in today’s difficult environment. **Contact Brandy VanDeWalle or Glennis McClure via e-mail at brandy.vandewalle@unl.edu or gmcclure3@unl.edu for this program.**

For professionals working with rural individuals who may be stressed, Nebraska Extension now offers a workshop entitled **Communicating With Farmers Under Stress**. This is ideal for lenders, business owners, health workers, or anyone dealing with rural folks. This program teaches signs to look for, confidence to approach someone experiencing stress, and correct reactions and resources to offer stressed individuals. If you would like to host this program in your community, contact me via e-mail at susan.harris@unl.edu.

Currently, a group of 17 individuals within Extension, UNL, and outside the University system are working to address the mental wellness of our state. It was an important issue before our state was thrown into a spiral of weather instability, and now has an added emphasis of urgency. We want to help our residents improve their quality of life. Please reach out if you have any questions or needs.

Visit flood.unl.edu to find more information on flood resources and mental wellness resources. For more resources specific to sleep, stress, or mental wellness, contact me via e-mail at the above address.