



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Knesha Rose-Davison, AgriSafe Network, Public Health Program Director

Office: 985-327-1627 Email: krrose@agrisafe.org

AGRISTRESS RESPONSE NETWORK, Supporting Ag Industry (Farmers and Ranchers) with Mental Wellness Resources

Covington, LA (May 11, 2021)—In recognition of mental health awareness month (May), AgriSafe Network, launched a national network of agriculture professionals that are committed to sharing non-proprietary information ensuring that resources and trainings are widely disseminated to reduce farmer and rancher stress. AgriStress Response Network, seeks to eliminate the stigma of seeking support for mental health including depression, anxiety and farmer suicide.

Twenty percent of any population has mental health complications, including farmers and ranchers. Stigma and privacy concerns associated with mental health issues may mean that many people do not seek out available behavioral health services. Many of the factors that affect agricultural production are largely beyond the control of the producer. For example, isolation, variability in weather, lack of access the health services, and low commodity prices; could have a direct impact on the rise in mental health issues. Good health, including mental health, is a key factor that contributes to one's ability to keep farming.

A national poll conducted by American Farm Bureau Federation (AFBF) in 2019, 2021 has shown financial issues and the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic are impacting farmers' mental health, this recent data speaks to the urgency of identifying local resources that can help farmers and ranchers cope with chronic stress and mental health concerns. AgriStress Response Network will contribute to sparsely available tools specifically targeting rural and agricultural communities. Dr. Tara Haskins, DNP, RN, Total Farmer Health Director provides clinical, educational and mental health expertise for AgriSafe's health initiatives and funded programming. She serves as lead for AgriStress Response Network and mental health programs drawing from her clinical experiences in behavioral health and substance use disorders.

AgriSafe is proud of its history to "Protect the People Who Feed the World," through programming targeting rural health professionals, ag producers and health and safety professionals. To connect with the AgriStress Response Network, follow us on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/AgriStressResponse>. For more information on AgriStress Response Network and Total Farm Health programming please contact Dr. Haskins at (318) 545-5400 or email thaskins@agrisafe.org. To explore options for sponsoring AgriSafe initiatives, please contact Natalie Roy, AgriSafe Executive Director, at nroy@agrisafe.org.

###

About AgriSafe Network

AgriSafe is an international 501©3 organization representing health and safety professionals who strive to reduce health disparities found among the agricultural community. Our mission is to support a growing network of trained agricultural health and safety professionals that assure access to preventative services for farm families and the agricultural community. AgriSafe is impactful across the globe because we use web-based technology to deliver the best trainings by experts in the field. For more information, visit www.agrisafe.org.