

# Cultivemos

The Farm and Ranch Stress Assistance Network in the Northeast (FRSAN-NE)  
Northeast Region Cooperative Extension

Cultivemos uses a cohort model of network-building. Small cohorts of members work together to share and create new resources in their areas of interest and expertise. Cohorts include Farm Worker, Mental Health, Veterans, Legal, PFAS, Farm Communication and Cooperative Extension. The University of Delaware Cooperative Extension facilitates the funding and organizational structure for the Extension Cohort; there are 75 extension professionals connected with this cohort.

Cultivemos, the Farm and Ranch Stress Assistance Network (FRSAN) in the Northeast Region, is comprised of a network of organizations and individuals; the grantee is the National Young Farmers Coalition. Extension professionals in the 12 Northeast states and Washington D.C. have been involved in this network since the 2018 Farm Bill developed FRSAN. The Northeast Region Cultivemos Network has 181 members' total.

## Extension Cohort Outcomes

15



individuals building relationships and the regional network during monthly gatherings (representing 10 institutions and states: WVU, WVS, MD, DE, DSU, PA, NY, VT, ME, and CT)

20



training opportunities were offered to cohort members. As a result of these efforts, state extension systems have adopted, expanded, or refined initiatives to support Northeast farmers and ranchers with services and resources.

85



Extension professionals from 12 states and Washington D.C. receive regional communication on farmer mental health resources, opportunities to grow their state-based programs, and ways to share products across the region.

13



state specific mental health referral resource sheets were created and distributed

27



monthly cohort network-building sessions were held from 2021 to 2023

10%



(119 in 1,060) regional Farm Aid referrals were sent to Extension, including the Cornell Small Farms Program

8



trainings were conducted to increase network members' support and services to rural, underserved populations and under-represented farm audiences

## Cohort Projects

### Confident Conversations Project

The University of Delaware Extension developed the Confident Conversations curriculum; it uses improv and humor to train service providers how to confidently address mental wellbeing.

It was developed for the target audiences of extension personnel, ag service providers and farm operators. A facilitator's guide, videos, workshop fact-sheets, and a state specific referral document were developed and are available to cohort members.

Ten face-to-face trainings and one online, 4-part series have been offered reaching 309 individuals. Pre/post data suggest that participants increased their confidence or likelihood to act in all items surveyed. Participants demonstrated increased ability to share information with farmers and ranchers about burnout and stressors, and in using humor and the network's materials.



Northeastern Regional Association of State Agricultural Experiment Station Directors

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### Mending Our Fences Podcast Project

A 7-part podcast for farmers and ranchers focuses on 6 different types of farm stressors (Money and Financial Security, Farm and Family Dynamics, Connection to the Land, Succession Planning and Farm Legacy, Managing Change/Uncertainty, and Grief and Loss). The podcast is found on Spotify, Apple, and Google Play. It was posted in the spring of 2023, and over 269 individuals have listened to this series to date.

### State Specific Projects

- » Extension and its partner organizations in Pennsylvania collaborated on six trainings and programs. They've reached over **500** individuals including Latino/Latina, beginning farm/ranch, and women audiences with mental wellbeing and stress reduction resources.
- » Delaware trained **250** professionals to identify stress in farmers and ranchers and proactively work to reduce stress levels and refer those affected to appropriate resources. They also offered programs for over **350** farm operators and workers. They have formed **16** partnerships with different organizations.
- » Programs in Maryland have reached **3,300** people since they began in 2019. They worked with Delaware Extension to offer the Culture and Resilience of Farms in Your Community training to elevate understanding of the culture of farming and farm stressors.
- » Maine leads the podcast efforts for Cultivemos and produced a Farm Wellness brochure and website. They offered wellness grants for farmers, small grants for organizations, and trained service providers.
- » In West Virginia, the Extension Rural Health Team was developed with the assistance of the state FR-SAN funds. This cross-program area team offered six programs including QPR, Mental Health First aid, and others to over **200** individuals.