

May is *Mental Health*
Awareness Month

**STRONGER
together**

WWW.ILFB.ORG/MENTALHEALTHWELLNESS

FIVE STEPS TO HELP SOMEONE AT RISK

1. Ask
2. Keep them safe
3. Be there
4. Help them connect
5. Follow up

Source: National Institute of Mental Health

NATIONAL SUICIDE PREVENTION LIFELINE
1-800-273-TALK (8255) and 988

ILLINOIS
FARM
BUREAU
Farm. Family. Food.™

Newest ‘talk of the town’ in agriculture

By ADRIENNE DESUTTER

Farmers love to talk. Some like to talk about the weather, or economics, or marketing. They all talk numbers.

But for the past few years in agriculture, there’s been a new “talk” in town. It’s largely uncomfortable and generally misunderstood. Maybe you guessed it: it’s the mental health talk. “Mental health? That’s not a talk for me. I don’t have depression, so why would I need to learn about mental health?” Here’s the thing: this talk isn’t just for those with depression, or those who we think “need help.” It’s for all of us. It’s for the farmers, whose never-ending pressure to succeed — despite enormous uncontrollable variables — is a heavy weight.

With their fields and livestock always on display, it’s easy to compare their farms to others’, and hard to feel like they measure up. It’s for the spouses, knowing that “busy season” isn’t just overtime for the farmer, but also overtime for them taking care of the home. Everything falls on their shoulders, and they’re left to tackle life alone for a while.

It’s for the farm kids, who play a ballgame without dad in the stands, or ache to be out running equipment on mom’s lap. It’s worrying about whether there will be room for them on the farm when they’re older, and feeling the daily stress that seeps down from the adults in the family.

It’s for the neighbor, concerned with the distant and downhearted way a farmer’s been acting recently. Is he OK? Should she say some-

thing? How could she possibly help? It’s for those living with a condition — like anxiety or depression — who spend their entire lives fighting an invisible enemy, and feeling completely misunderstood. They know it’s not just sadness, not just worry, and the “simple advice” from others (who often mean well but don’t know enough about the condition) feels shameful and minimizing.

It’s for the farm family, exhausted by the juggle of trying to be the best parent, spouse, farmer, leader, volunteer, and professional... and the feeling of inevitable inadequacy when the balls start dropping.

Mental health talk isn’t just about “having an illness.” It’s about the chaos in all of us. It’s learning how to respond to stress in a healthy and productive way, how to cultivate an environment where it’s OK to ask for and accept help simply to enhance our efficiency as humans, and how to convince ourselves and our communities to make a life instead of just making a living.

When we strive to be better people, we become better farmers, and our mental health is at the core of it all. Farm life is the best life. It can also be a hard life. And that’s OK, as long as your mental health is OK, too. It’s your best defense against the tough stuff, and your best chance at staying in control when so many things feel out of control. There’s so much we can do to “be better,” no matter how mentally fit we are. So let’s keep having this talk, and continue to grow healthier, smarter and stronger — together.

Be part of Shop Local

Are you a beef producer who sells tasty products directly to consumers? We want to celebrate you and advertise your business, not only in May for Beef Month, but all year long! Consider registering your farm on our Shop Local directory. Your listing comes complimentary with your Farm Bureau membership and allows you to promote your products across a variety of platforms, including our website and the Abenity member benefits app.

Our Shop Local directory provides simple yet powerful search tools to connect growers, buyers, sellers, and consumers. Join and register your business today. Once you join, you can login and access your account profile as often as



you need. The more information you place on your profile, the more searchable you become to the consumer and

across a joint network of affiliations. You can also add an e-commerce store or link to an existing store. And more!

Because of our partnerships, updating your MarketMaker profile enables automatic updates across multiple platforms, including Illinois Farm Bureau, Illinois Specialty Growers Association, Illinois Farmers Market Association, Farmer Veteran Coalition of Illinois, and the newly added Buy Fresh Buy Local Illinois. All of these affiliations are important ways to increase sales and access.

To learn more and register your farm, visit www.ricofarmbureau.org/shop-local.html or scan the following QR code.

Teaching to thrive, pivot

By KATIE GRADY
KNOX COUNTY FARM BUREAU MEMBER

On March 24 over 200 women attended the 11th annual Women in Agriculture Conference in Rock Island, Illinois, sponsored by the IFB. This event is organized by 13 County Farm Bureau managers.

My main takeaway from the day was despite the challenges we may face, it’s all about thriving and showing gratitude that we get to have this lifestyle and be a part of rural America. The morning keynote speaker, Carey Portell from Missouri, shared her story about having limitations from being in a car accident. Despite all she has been through, she still is a full-time cattle farmer. She thrives despite challenges.

Breakouts included managing farm input costs, an update on carbon markets, review of farm lease agreements, securing the future of animal agriculture and farm stress. The closing keynote speaker was Amanda Radke, a South Dakota rancher. She said sometimes in agriculture we become rigid. We need to innovate and pivot as rural America is a true way of life. We need to lead with positivity and teach our kids responsibility. Also, remember to take time for family dinner, even if it is in the field.



Sen. Halpin visits VanDaele Farms

On April 6, Sen. Michael Halpin visited VanDaele Farms to learn more about spring planting, the equipment that is used, and sheep production. This was the first farm visit of the year with an elected official, and because our districts, representatives and senators have changed significantly with the last election, we are planning several legislative visits this summer. Pictured are RICFB director Dennis VanDaele and Sen. Halpin.

Rock Island County Farm Bureau Foundation

CHARITY SOLICITED FOR
1008
BIRD NUMBER

I PLEDGE TO DONATE:

\$ _____ to the charity noted above.
(one time, flat donation amount)

BIRDIES FOR CHARITY BONUS FUND

☐ Yes, I would like to make an additional donation to the Birdies for Charity Bonus Fund in the amount of \$ _____, to help provide the minimum 5% match to all participating charities.

GUESS THE BIRDIES TO WIN A TWO YEAR LEASE ON A 2023 LEXUS!

I guess that _____ birdies will be made.
Only one grand prize will be awarded. Void where prohibited by law.

BIRDIES SCORED BY YEAR

2,040 (2014)	1,918 (2017)	N/A (2020)
1,990 (2015)	2,355 (2018)	1,905 (2021)
1,982 (2016)	2,091 (2019)	2,041 (2022)

PLEDGE & DONOR INFORMATION (please print)

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY, STATE, ZIP _____

PHONE AND/OR EMAIL _____

Please include payment & make checks payable to:
BIRDIES FOR CHARITY

Chip in for your chance to win

When you chip in to help area charities, you could win! But your favorite charity will be the real winner. That’s because participating charities receive 100% of the donations pledged to them in this program, plus a bonus from the Birdies for Charity Bonus Fund, which is a guaranteed 5% match.

HERE’S HOW IT WORKS

Simply make a one-time flat donation and mail with payment to the Birdies for Charity office at 15623 Coaltown Road, East Moline, IL 61244

To enter the contest, guess the number of birdies that will actually be made by PGA TOUR Pros during the tournament, Wednesday through Sunday. A grand prize will be given to one person who guesses the correct number. In case of ties, winners will be randomly selected.

KEEP FOR YOUR RECORDS AS YOUR RECEIPT

I pledged \$ _____ one-time donation.

I guessed _____ birdies would be made.

Payment was included with pledge

☐ YES \$ _____ ☐ NO

☐ CASH ☐ CHECK NO.

Please make checks payable to:
BIRDIES FOR CHARITY
15623 COALTOWN ROAD
EAST MOLINE, IL 61244



Quad Cities Golf Classic Charitable Foundation is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization, EIN #93-1332421, doing business as John Deere Classic & Birdies for Charity.



GRAND PRIZE:
2 YEAR LEASE ON A 2023 LEXUS NX!

One lucky supporter of the John Deere Classic’s Birdies SMART LEXUS OF QUAD CITIES for Charity program will win a 2 year lease on a 2023 Lexus NX, courtesy of Smart Lexus of Quad Cities.

CONTEST RULES

- Only 1 grand prize awarded. Ties determined by random drawing.
- All guesses must be on an official pledge card and received at the tournament office by June 16.
- Rules are available at www.birdiesforcharity.com
- No pledge or purchase required. Need not be present to win.
- Pledges submitted after the JDC (after July 9, 2023) may be applied the following year.

Calendar of Events

MAY – BEEF MONTH, MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS MONTH

- 15 RICFB Board of Directors meeting
- 29 Office closed for Memorial Day

JUNE – DAIRY MONTH

- 15 District 3 Meeting, Henry County Farm Bureau at 5:30 p.m. – more info to come
- 19 RICFB Board of Directors meeting
- 28 Marketing Committee planning committee meeting