The Problem:
America’s farmers, agricultural workers, and their families are experiencing crisis levels of stress. Weather, commodity markets, isolation, and changing dynamics in agriculture and farm-families contribute to chronic stress, affecting both physical and mental health. At the same time, nearly 97% of rural counties have a mental health professional shortage.

The Solution:
UMASH hosted a working forum, Building Resilient Agricultural Communities, with the MN Dept of Agriculture to bring together diverse perspectives to explore issues, identify challenges, brainstorm innovative solutions, and stimulate partnerships. UMASH provided funding for partnership projects to follow up on ideas generated at the forum.

The IMPACT
The forum brought together 69 attendees from multiple sectors. 15 proposals were submitted; 3 partner projects were funded:

GEAR UP FOR AG PROGRAM
Expanded health and safety program for college agriculture students to address stress, mental health and resiliency.
» Produced innovative motion graphic to foster conversation.
» Delivered to college students studying agriculture in the region.

CULTIVATING RESILIENCY FOR WOMEN IN AGRICULTURE
A 6-part webinar series (Dec 2018 - April 2019).
» Created new partnerships with multiple regional, state, academic and mental health organizations.
» 300+ attendees joined the first 3 webinars (live or recording)
» Featured by 30+ news outlets and agriculture organizations.

USING STORIES AND EDUCATION TO BUILD RESILIENT AGRICULTURAL COMMUNITIES
NAMI MN is creating new connections in rural MN to provide suicide prevention training and curate stories from agricultural communities.
» Enrolled 3-4 new trainers for Question, Persuade, Refer (QPR) training rural MN.
» Scheduling suicide prevention classes in Northern MN.
» Engaged volunteer from agricultural community to share personal stories.