

# The UMASH Connection Farms and People

A newsletter of the Upper Midwest  
Agricultural Safety and Health Center



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## ONE HEALTH IN AGRICULTURAL SAFETY AND HEALTH



## FORMING PARTNERSHIPS TO SUPPORT THE MENTAL WELL-BEING OF AGRICULTURE COMMUNITIES

People who work in agriculture are experiencing some of the toughest economic times in years. Making a living in agriculture is never easy as the whims of weather, unpredictable prices for inputs and commodities, mercurial consumer demands, government policies, and large economic forces including global trade create uncertainties that can be unsettling. One of the many consequences of farming in these uncertain times is the burden of stress, which can grow and have severe and potentially lasting effects on the mental and physical well-being of people in agricultural communities. The Upper Midwest Agriculture Safety and Health Center (UMASH) has joined other organizations and entities in recognizing the rising problem of stress and its impacts on the overall well-being of the people who produce our food, and is working to help develop partnerships to address this crisis.

Supporting the mental well-being of agriculture communities can be as complicated as farming itself. There is no single cause of mental stress and no single solution. It is therefore important to come at the problem from different angles and use the talent and resources of many people. UMASH held the **Building Resilient Agricultural Communities Forum** in June 2018. From that forum three partnership projects, which are highlighted in this issue of our newsletter, were created to chip away at the challenge of mental health in agricultural communities; each forming a unique partnership and taking a different approach. The **National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) Minnesota** is focusing on developing materials for and offering suicide prevention classes directed at agricultural communities. The **Cultivating Resiliency for Women in Agriculture** is a project formed by four women with various connections to agriculture in their personal and professional lives who connected through the UMASH forum and began a project to bring tailored information to women in agriculture to help them navigate stress in themselves, their families, and their communities. Finally, the **Ag Health and Safety Alliance**, which focuses on health and safety education in young farmers, recognized a need for better teaching tools to help get college students in agriculture programs more comfortable with and capable of recognizing signs and symptoms of stress and mental health issues in themselves, and family members.

This collection of small, but important projects demonstrate how addressing stress and mental health issues in agricultural communities requires multiple angles to different populations.

We believe the UMASH partnership projects will be one of the many needed solutions to help the people who produce our food stay healthy and well in these uncertain times.

Bruce Alexander  
Director  
Upper Midwest Agricultural Safety and Health Center

⇒ [READ MORE ABOUT THE PROJECTS ON PAGE 2](#)

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### AG SAFETY AWARENESS PROGRAM (ASAP) WEEK

MARCH 3-9

#ASAP19 #UsAgCenters  
#KeepFarmsSafe

#### DAILY TOPICS

MONDAY: Emergency Preparedness

TUESDAY: Livestock

WEDNESDAY: Heat Stress and Hydration

THURSDAY: Roadway Safety

FRIDAY: Hearing Safety



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GET INVOLVED @ [umash.umn.edu/asap-2019](http://umash.umn.edu/asap-2019)

# STRESS AND MENTAL HEALTH PARTNER PROJECTS

## Tackling Stress in Agriculture X 3

As a result of the Building Resilient Agricultural Communities Forum on stress and mental health, UMASH funded three partner projects to address the complex topic with unique yet practical methods.

### USING STORIES AND EDUCATION TO BUILD RESILIENT AGRICULTURAL COMMUNITIES



NAMI Minnesota and UMASH are partnering to provide suicide prevention classes in agricultural communities and gather personal farm stories.

- » Is your group or organization interested in hosting a suicide prevention class?
- » Are you a farmer or member of a farm family who would like to share your story of living with mental illness or being a suicide loss survivor?

[umash.umn.edu/nami](http://umash.umn.edu/nami)

### STRESS AND MENTAL HEALTH CONVERSATIONS WITH GEAR UP FOR AG HEALTH AND SAFETY



This program focuses on developing innovative educational tools for college students in agriculture programs.

A Mental Health and Stress Motion Graphic training tool has been developed to assist in starting this important conversation, and mental health questions have been added to the program's pre- and post- surveys.

[umash.umn.edu/gear-up](http://umash.umn.edu/gear-up)

### CULTIVATING RESILIENCY FOR WOMEN IN AGRICULTURE



#### WEBINARS:

FREE webinars to connect women in agriculture to resources and information to help manage stress.

- » **March 8**  
*Increasing Joy and Happiness While Living a Farm Life*
- » **April 12**  
*Putting It All Together*  
*Previous webinars are available online.*

#### QUESTIONNAIRE:

Take the brief anonymous survey. Open to all women in agriculture.

[umash.umn.edu/resiliency](http://umash.umn.edu/resiliency)

## SAVE THE DATE!



June 24-27, 2019  
Des Moines, IA

Do you work directly with farmers? Do you teach agriculture to high school students? Are you a business providing goods and services to farmers? If so, you understand the dangers farmers face every day.

The ISASH conference brings together professionals in ag safety and health, researchers, educators and others to share new information and practices.

Join us in Des Moines and learn how you can be a safety connection to farmers, workers and their families.

⇒ [LEARN MORE @ isash.org](http://isash.org)



August 6-8, 2019  
Morgan, MN

Something new and exciting will be happening at MN Farmfest this year.

*Come and bring your family, friends and neighbors.*

- ✓ Watch live ag safety and rescue demos.
- ✓ Learn from ag health and safety exhibitors and hands-on activities.
- ✓ Get free health screening.

*Protect your family and your business.*

⇒ [STAY TUNED FOR MORE DETAILS](#)

# SPRING INTO SAFE AGRITOURISM CAMPAIGN

## Cabin fever? Get social and ready for spring!

Though it may not look or feel like it right now, Spring IS coming ... and we have a perfect way for you to get ready!

On February 25, we launched a social media campaign: *"Spring into Safe Agritourism"*. During the campaign from **February 25 - April 5**, we will be promoting agritourism and sharing health and safety resources.

UMASH, the University of Minnesota Tourism Center, and the National Children's Center for Rural and Agricultural Health and Safety invite you to **join the campaign**.



⇒ **DOWNLOAD A SOCIAL MEDIA TOOLKIT @ [umash.umn.edu/agritourism](http://umash.umn.edu/agritourism)** ⇐

### WHO SHOULD PARTICIPATE?

- » Anyone with a passion for agritourism, and making sure venues are safe and healthy for visitors and vendors.

### HOW DO I PARTICIPATE?

- » Post content to Facebook and Twitter **2 times per week** from February 25- April 5, 2019.
- » Schedule content using our toolkit (or create your own), and use hashtags **#SafeAgritourism #SaferFACES**
- » Share the resources **directly with farmers** you know who are hosting agritourism events.

## NEW! AG EDUCATION RESOURCES



UMASH has added a new section on resources for ag education teachers including:

- ✓ **Positive Animal Handling lesson plans and student worksheets.** The 5 lesson plans were developed to accompany the Stockmanship videos, which focus on low stress animal handling in dairy farms.
- ✓ **Telling The Story discussion guides.** A great resource for teachers and substitute teachers. The guides walk through a farm injury or crisis and ask students to use critical thinking skills to reflect on the situation.
- ✓ **FFA'ers and agritourism infographic.** FFA students at the 2018 National FFA Convention gave UMASH great feedback on their experience working in agritourism venues. Check out the infographic to learn more about jobs performed by FFA workers, health and safety training received, and distractions that may impact the work.

### ANSWER A BRIEF SURVEY

We are developing a **curriculum calendar for the 2019-2020 school year** and would love your input!

*These resources are free and ready for you to use in the classroom!*

⇒ **LEARN MORE AND TAKE THE SURVEY @ [umash.umn.edu/AgEd](http://umash.umn.edu/AgEd)**

## FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES



### Midwest Center for Occupational Health and Safety (MCOHS)

APPLICATION DEADLINE: April 19

The Midwest Center for Occupational Health and Safety (MCOHS) is now accepting applications for their pilot projects research training program. Grants ranging from \$5,000 to a maximum of \$20,000 are available to occupational health and safety (OHS) researchers at educational institutions in Minnesota, North Dakota, South Dakota, and Wisconsin.

⇒ [mcohs.umn.edu/pilot-projects-rfp](http://mcohs.umn.edu/pilot-projects-rfp)

## RECENT PUBLICATIONS AND PROJECT NEWS

### Return to Work Project featured in Journal of Medical Internet Research

Congratulations to **Bryan Weichelt, PhD, MBA** at the National Farm Medicine Center on his recent publication in the Journal of Medical Internet Research, *Farm Owners and Workers as Key Informants in User-Centered Occupational Health Prototype Development: A Stakeholder-Engaged Project*.

⇒ Read the article @ [www.jmir.org/2019/1/e9711](http://www.jmir.org/2019/1/e9711)

### Casper Bendixsen, PhD named Director of National Farm Medicine Center

At UMASH, we are proud to partner with a number of other organizations to promote safety and health in agriculture.

One of our partners, the National Farm Medicine Center (NFMC) recently announced a new director - **Casper "Cap" Bendixsen, PhD**. Cap has been a leader at the NFMC and involved with a number of UMASH projects - most recently the **Rural Firefighters Delivering Ag Safety and Health (RF-DASH)** project, an innovative training program for rural fire departments.



### *Congratulations Cap!*

⇒ Read the press release @ [umash.umn.edu/casper-bendixsen-nfmc](http://umash.umn.edu/casper-bendixsen-nfmc)

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### ASAP Week

March 3-9

### 2019 FUSION Conference

March 15-18  
Milwaukee, WI

### Stand Up for Grain Safety Week

March 25-29

### Central Plains Dairy Expo

March 26-28  
Sioux Falls, SD

### Women's Agricultural Leadership Conference

April 10  
Chaska, MN

### Upper Midwest Dairy Industry Association Spring Meetings

April 16 & 17  
St. Cloud, MN & Rochester, MN

### Minnesota State FFA Convention

April 28-30  
St. Paul, MN

### MN Safety and Health Conference

May 7-8  
Prior Lake, MN

### University of Minnesota Summer Public Health Institute

May 20 - June 7  
Minneapolis, MN

### ISASH 2019

June 24-27  
Des Moines, IA

### Ag Media Summit

July 28-30  
Minneapolis, MN

Learn more and view full event list at:  
[umash.umn.edu/upcoming-events](http://umash.umn.edu/upcoming-events)

## GET CONNECTED



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