



ASA & USB Remind All Farmers: #SoyHelp to Manage Farm Stress Only a Web Click or Social Search Away

Joint campaign during Mental Health Month will offer tips and resources to help farmers stay healthy

Washington, D.C. May 4, 2022. The American Soybean Association (ASA), United Soybean Board (USB), and soy states want to help farmers who may need a hand managing the stress of life on the farm. This May during Mental Health Month, the soy community will continue its proactive communications campaign to combat farm stress by offering **#SoyHelp**.



Help comes in many forms and from many sources, and the groups have researched and updated a range of options that will be shared both nationally and by state soybean affiliates throughout the month—and that live on the [soygrowers.com](https://www.soygrowers.com) website year-round:

1. National mental health resources, including crisis centers and suicide hotlines
2. Agriculture-specific resources for farmers and farm families, both national and by soy state

While the pandemic certainly exacerbated farm stress, farmers are routinely faced with varying levels of anxiety resulting from a host of ongoing and unexpected concerns, from weather occurrences to supply issues, trade troubles to creeping inflation.

Brad Doyle, president of ASA and soybean farmer from Arkansas said, "We want these resources to resonate regardless of age, location, race, gender, or the circumstances that have led to needing a hand. Whether a long-time farmer feeling overwhelmed by a current situation, a young person just starting out in agriculture facing financial hardships, or family members trying to navigate how to assist their loved ones, we want them to have a starting point for seeking help."

Included in the resources are links to self-assessments, professional services, and local health care facilities; hotlines for urgent needs; warmlines for helpful advice; chat and text lines for instant access; and articles on symptoms, solutions, and how to start uncomfortable but healthy discussions.

Soy farmer and USB Chair Ralph Lott from New York said, "The #SoyHelp campaign has two objectives. Certainly we want to get resources in the hands of those who need help and make sure they are aware that options exist for managing and mending their mental wellness. But, we also hope this ongoing campaign will continue to chip away at the old stigmas that sometimes exist in talking openly about the tolls of stress and seeking help—especially in rural communities."

The **#SoyHelp** campaign will include #SoyHelp social media posts throughout May on ASA & USB social media (Facebook, Twitter); related content in the organizations' newsletters that can be shared

by soy states and other interested groups; editorials from soy growers on their encounters with #FarmStress; and, qualified advice on the subjects of farm stress and seeking emotional support.

#SoyHelp Program Background: *The #SoyHelp campaign is a joint outreach project started by concerned national and state soy groups in May 2020 at the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. A survey conducted in April that year by the American Soybean Association COVID-19 Task Force captured pandemic effects reported by soy growers on them, their operations, employees, and families. Stress reported by the 86 farmer respondents from across the soy-producing states was high, leading to the #SoyHelp campaign.*

*The **ASA COVID-19 Task Force** was a 12-person ad hoc group formed March 2020 that consisted of ASA board members and senior staff, state affiliate leaders, and representatives from soybean partner organizations United Soybean Board (USB) and U.S. Soybean Export Council (USSEC). The objective of the task force was to collect information on how COVID was impacting soy farmers to share that information with national leaders, as well as to communicate information from national leaders to soy farmers and the agricultural community. The survey referenced was sent to approximately 140 farmer leaders serving on the boards of ASA, USB and USSEC, with 60% of those persons participating.*

*The **American Soybean Association** represents U.S. soybean farmers on domestic and international policy issues important to the soybean industry. ASA has 26 affiliated state associations representing 30 soybean-producing states and more than 500,000 soybean farmers. More information at soygrowers.com.*

***United Soybean Board's** 78 volunteer farmer-directors work on behalf of all U.S. soybean farmers to achieve maximum value for their soy checkoff investments. These volunteers create value by investing in research, education and promotion with the vision to deliver sustainable soy solutions to every life, every day across the three priority areas of Infrastructure & Connectivity, Health & Nutrition, and Innovation & Technology. As stipulated in the federal Soybean Promotion, Research and Consumer Information Act, the USDA Agricultural Marketing Service has oversight responsibilities for USB and the soy checkoff. For more information on the United Soybean Board, visit unitedsoybean.org.*

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For more information contact:

Wendy Brannen, American Soybean Association, wbrannen@soy.org

Paul Murphy-Spooner, United Soybean Board, pmurphyspooner@unitedsoybean.org

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