

# Stress

Farming can be very stressful at times. Extremely climatic events, market fluctuations, labor shortage and natural disaster can all contribute to stress. Social isolation and working long hours can make this hard to cope with. It is important to keep fit to enjoy the good things in life.

## OBJECTIVE

Learn how to identify symptoms of stress and take action

## SYMPTOMS

Different people respond differently to potentially stressful situations. Be aware of some of the common effects of stress to watch out for in yourself and others:

- Poor sleep or sleeping more than usual
- Poor concentration, irritability, and anger
- Increased drinking or smoking
- Poor decision making, avoiding making decisions or forgetfulness
- Changed appetite, not feeling well or nervousness
- Feel like you are at the end of your tether

## TAKE NOTICE, TAKE ACTION

- Eat healthy, nutritious food
- Get adequate sleep and have a regular sleep routine
- Keep physically active
- Make time to get away from the farm
- Find things to laugh about
- Allow yourself time to do something you enjoy
- Keep socially connected

## ACTIONS

These are things that can help you through a stressful period

- Make a list of people and services you can call on for information and assistance
- Break large tasks into smaller, more manageable tasks which you can then prioritise in order of importance
- Keep the lines of communication open—schedule regular farm business meetings and don't avoid making decisions
- Celebrate and reward success, even small wins should be acknowledged
- Keep in touch with farming groups and industry networks—they are sources of information and social contact
- Schedule time away from the farm—taking a break gives you fresh perspective, renewed energy and improved decision-making power.

## GET HELP

VFF Email: [mofs@vff.org.au](mailto:mofs@vff.org.au)

VFF Phone: 1300 822 833