

CELEBRATING VETERAN TOTAL FARMER HEALTH

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Protecting the People who Feed the World[®]



Objectives

By the end of this session, participants will be able to:

1. Celebrate the power of rural veterans and their desire to improve agricultural communities
2. Apply the Total Farmer Health concept to veterans working in agriculture
3. Identify health disparities Veteran farmers face
4. Develop creative solutions to improve the health of veteran farmers



Polling Questions:

Are you a veteran or in active military service?

Do you serve the health and/or safety needs of veterans or those in military service?

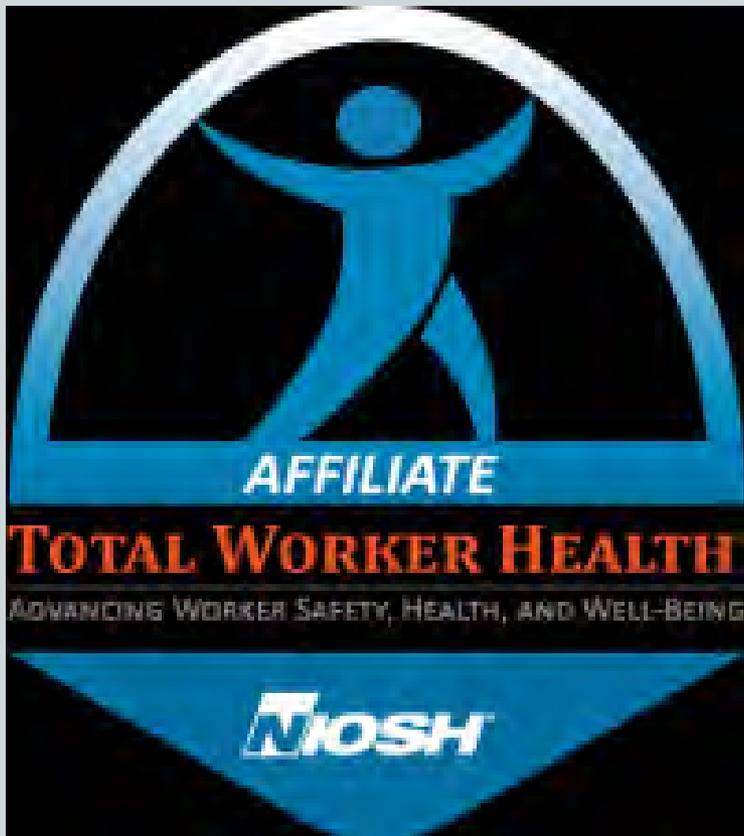
A close-up, slightly blurred photograph of the American flag, showing the stars and stripes. The flag is the background for the text.

THANK YOU,
VETERANS

TOTAL FARMER HEALTH



CDC/NIOSH Partnership



Total Worker Health® Philosophy

The TWH approach recommends that employers and workers collaborate to design safe and healthy workplaces that support all workers in both their workplace and personal health goals:

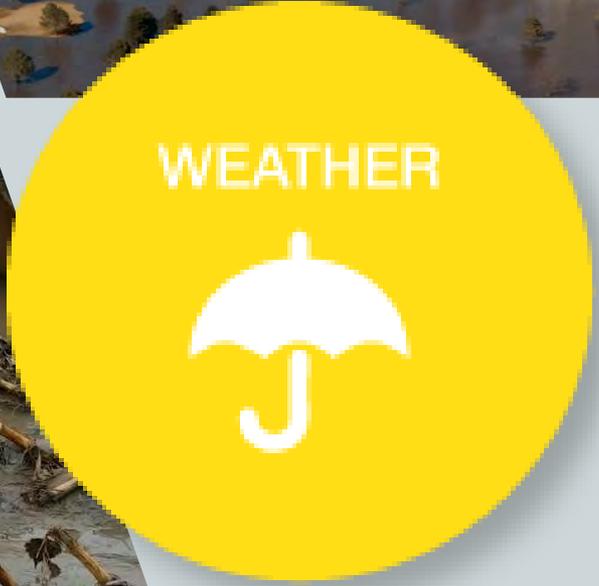
- full time
- part time, contract
- mobile work force
- young, old
- male, female
- physically or mentally challenged

This is the mission & message of Total Farmer Health!



Farm & ranch work requires upper and lower body strength as well as involves repeated twisting and turning.





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WILDFIRE HEALTH THREATS

RISK FACTORS FOR FARMERS AND RANCHERS



Water quality changes (e.g. increased metal content) may make water unsafe for human and animals



Urgently moving livestock and materials from disaster areas may put you and the animals in danger



Heat exposure may cause fatigue, dizziness, heat stroke, and heat exhaustion



Pollutants and particulate matter (PM2.5) from smoke can worsen heart and respiratory conditions



Loss of homes, produce, and livestock can cause immense anxiety, stress and be extremely costly



Exposure to smoke can exacerbate illness and effect quality of life in susceptible populations



Protecting the People who Feed the World

FARM FLOOD HEALTH THREATS

RISK FACTORS DURING RECOVERY



Water may not be safe to drink, cook, bath or disinfect.



Transmission of disease can occur between humans and animals.



Intense exposure to hot temperatures and high humidity can cause heat related illnesses.



Microbial (e.g. mold) growth rapidly increases and spreads due to flooding waters.



Flooded storage of pesticides and petrochemicals (e.g. oil, hydraulic fluid) can pose threats to human health.



A flood can cause both emotional and physical stress.



What words best describe the purpose of the VA Whole Health program?

1. VA program that assists with access to care
2. VA program that is similar to One Health
3. VA program that empowers each individual to take charge of their health and well-being
4. Unsure-have never heard of VA Whole Health

Whole Health Shareable Social Media Posts



**DISCOVER
WHAT MATTER
TO YOU.**

Live Whole Health.

VA |  U.S. Department
of Veterans Affairs

va.gov/wholehealth



Polling Questions:

Do you produce agricultural products?

Do you serve the health and/or safety needs of agricultural producers?

The Power of Ag Producers

- Farmers and farm workers contribute billions of dollars to our economy.
- They have a love of land, community, and heritage.
- Risks are an accepted trait.
- Farmers are self-reliant, stoic and determined to succeed.



2017 Census Farm Producers

- 3.4 million producers
- **57.5** years of avg. age vs. **67.9** avg. age of producers with military service
- 95% male
- Over 370,000 producers had served or were serving in 2017

Source: USDA NASS, 2017 Census of Agriculture

Snapshot of U.S. Producers, 2017

U.S. total = 3,399,834

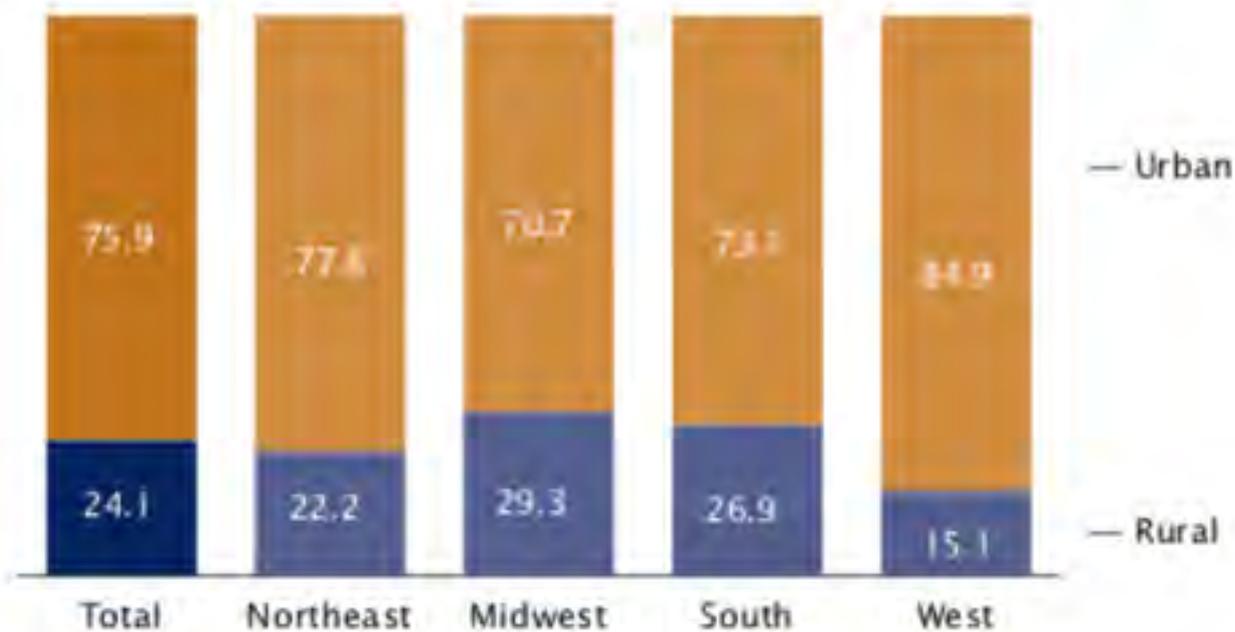
	% of total
Male	64
Female	36
Age <35	8
Age 35-64	58
Age 65+	34
10 years or less farming	27
11 years or more farming	73
Lived on their farm	74
Did not work off farm	39
Worked off farm 1 to 199 days	21
Worked off farm 200+ days	40
Primary occupation farming	42
Primary occupation other than farming	58
With military service	11
Hispanic	3
American Indian/Alaska Native	1.7
Asian	0.6
Black	1.3
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	0.1
White	95.4
More than one race	0.8

Rural Community:

- Many veterans choose to live in rural communities for many reasons such as:
 - Living in a closer proximity to family, friends and community
 - Open space for recreation
 - Outdoor work
 - More privacy and quieter living space
 - Lower cost of living
 - Less crowded towns and schools
- While rural communities offer many benefits to Veterans, this lifestyle is not without challenges. Veterans often experience issues with access to health, that are often intensified by combat-related illnesses and injuries.

Figure 1.

Percentage of Veterans Living in Rural and Urban Areas by Region: 2011-2015



Note: For more information, see <www.census.gov/programs-surveys/acs/>.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2011-2015 American Community Survey, 5-year estimates.

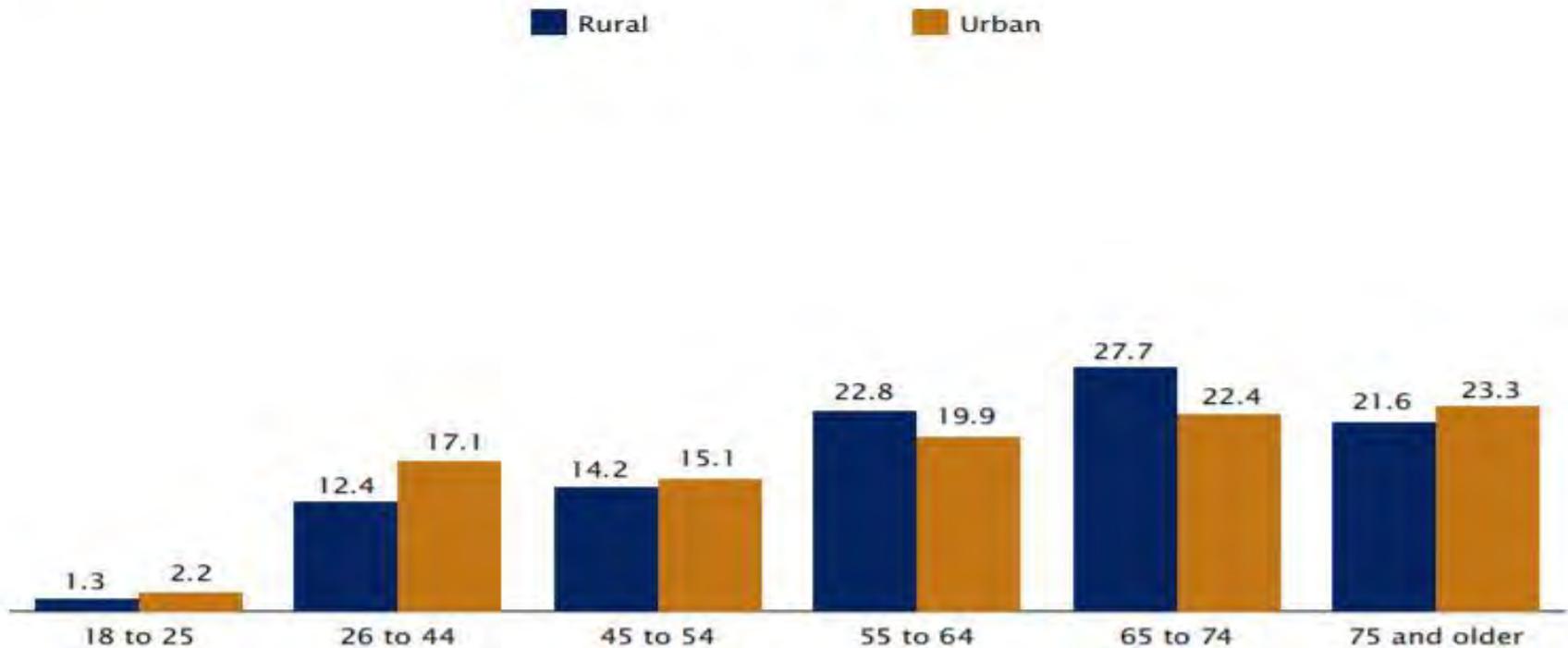
According to the U.S. Census Bureau, out of the 20 million veterans living in the United States from 2011-2015, about 5 million veterans lived in rural areas.

Statistics:

- 58% of rural Veterans are enrolled in the VA health care system (significantly higher than the 37% enrollment rate of urban Veterans)
- 18% of rural enrolled Veterans have at least 1 service connected condition
- 6% of enrolled rural Veterans are women
- 15% of enrolled rural Veterans are minorities
- 52% earn less than \$35,000 annually
- 27% do not have access to home internet

Demographics:

Figure 3.
Age Distribution of Rural and Urban Veterans: 2011–2015
(In percent)



Note: For more information, see <www.census.gov/programs-surveys/acs/>.
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2011–2015 American Community Survey, 5-year estimates.

Demographics continued:

- Older Population Medically Complex
- More Likely to be Diagnosed
 - Diabetes
 - Obesity
 - High Blood Pressure
 - Heart Conditions
- These conditions require more frequent, continuous and costly care.
- Nearly **460,000** rural Veterans served in Iraq and Afghanistan making the next generation of rural Veterans inclined to have multiple medical and combat-related issues, which also requires significant, on-going care.

Disabilities Affecting Veterans:

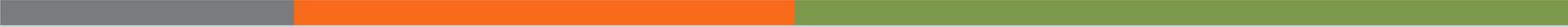
- ◆ According to the 2016 Veterans Benefits Administration Annual Report, the following conditions were listed as prevalent service-connected disabilities affecting veterans:
 - Tinnitus and hearing loss
 - Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD)
 - Musculoskeletal issues
 - Scars, general
 - Diabetes mellitus
 - Paralysis of the sciatic nerve
 - Migraine

Rural Veteran Disparities:

- Rural male veterans have higher rates of unemployment and disability, and have difficulty with access to mental health care.
- In addition to the problems that males face, rural female veterans tend to have access issues related to child-care, transportation, the need for flexible hours for appointments.

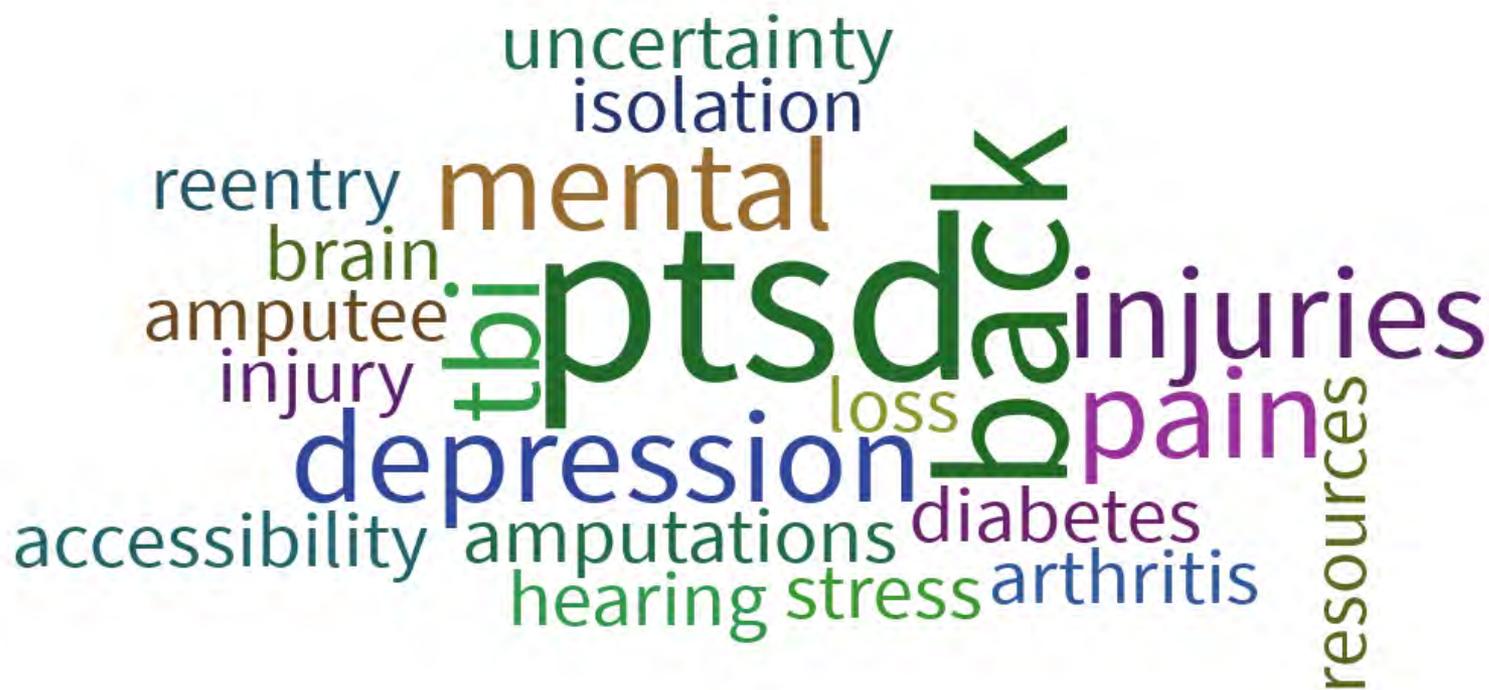


Show Video of Cindy Stockamp



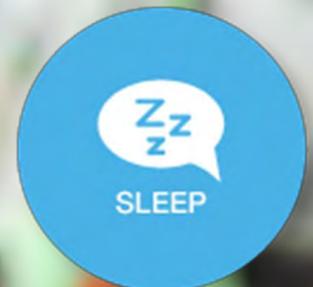
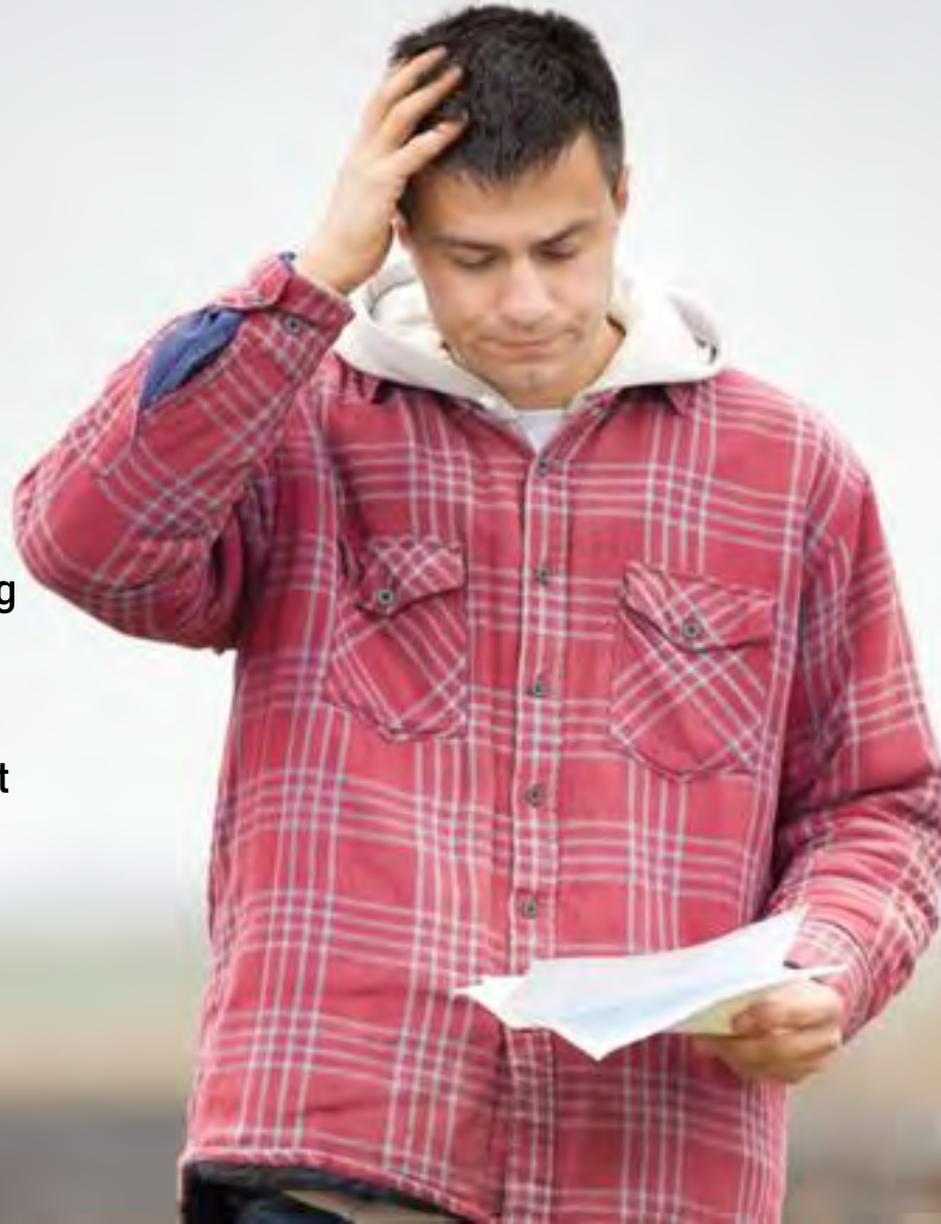
Polling Question: Did you attend the virtual AgriSafe Think Tank in May 2019 on “Improving the Health of Farmer Military Veterans”?

What are the top health conditions veteran farmers face?



Lack of social support and isolation can compound a farmer's ability to handle high stress situations:

- low commodity prices
- natural disasters
- family conflict involving succession planning
- workforce shortages
- medical or injury event



Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)

- A psychiatric disorder that can occur in people who have experienced or witnessed a traumatic event such as a natural disaster, a serious accident, a terrorist act, war/combat, rape or other violent personal assault.
- Affects approximately **3.5 percent** of U.S. adults, and an estimated **one in 11 people** will be diagnosed PTSD in their lifetime.
- Women are **twice** as likely as men to have PTSD.

Source: [American Psychiatric Association](#)

Challenges in Access to Mental Health Services:

- ✧ Accessibility
- ✧ Availability
- ✧ Acceptability

Accessibility:

- Rural residents often travel long distances to receive services, are less likely to recognize illness, and are less likely to be insured for mental health service

Availability:

- Mental healthcare needs are not met in many rural communities across the country because adequate services are not present.
- Rural communities tend to have much smaller populations when compared to urban areas. This combined with the overall shortage of mental health professionals, causes mental health providers to gravitate to practicing in urban areas that have higher populations.
- Those living in rural communities often have to travel far distances in order to access facilities and clinics.

Acceptability:

- A major reason many veterans avoid seeking out help for psychiatric issues is because of the perceived stigma associated with needing mental health care.
- The stigma of needing or receiving mental health care and fewer options of trained professionals who work in rural areas create barriers to care for Veterans

Solutions:

- Accessibility & Availability- Telemental Health Delivery to rural areas that do not have access to mental health clinics and facilities.
- Video-Atlas

Community Based Opportunities:

➤ **National AgrAbility Project** The vision of AgrAbility is to enhance quality of life for farmers, ranchers, and other agricultural workers with disabilities, so that they, their families, and their communities continue to succeed in rural America. AgrAbility consists of the National AgrAbility Project (NAP) and State/Regional AgrAbility Projects (SRAPs). Both the NAP and all the SRAPs must be partnerships between a land grant university and at least one nonprofit disability organization.

➤ <http://www.agrability.org/>



FARMER VETERAN

— **COALITION** —

The Veterans Crisis Line is a free, confidential resource available to any Veteran, even if they are not enrolled in VA health care or registered with VA. Care does not end when the conversation is over. The Veterans Crisis Line can connect Veterans to their local suicide prevention coordinators, who will follow up and coordinate care.



Founded the National Veterans Suicide Prevention Hotline

2007



Launched online chat

2009



Introduced Veterans Crisis Line branding

2010



Launched text **838255**

2011



Increased number of responders by 50%

2012



Opened second and third call centers; Increased staff

2016 & 2018



Started Caring Letters program

2020



More than **5.4 million calls**



More than **204,000 texts**



More than **630,000 chats**



More than **975,000 referrals**

to VA Suicide Prevention Coordinators

More than **184,000** dispatches of emergency services

U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs Office of Mental Health & Suicide Prevention
Q2 Veterans Crisis Line Social Media Posts
April 22, 2021

Facebook Copy (280 characters)	Twitter Copy (280 characters)	Instagram Copy	Media Asset
<p>Save and share the Veterans Crisis Line to your contact list and encourage others to do so. VeteransCrisisLine.net</p>	<p>Save and share the #VeteransCrisisLine to your contact list and encourage others to do so. VeteransCrisisLine.net</p>	<p>Save and share the #VeteransCrisisLine to your contact list and encourage others to do so. VeteransCrisisLine.net</p>	 <p><i>SPP_VCL Q2 Social Media_1</i></p>  <p><i>SPP_VCL Q2 Social Media_1</i></p>
<p>Are you a Veteran going through crisis? Call (1-800-273-8255 and Press 1), text (838255), or chat (VeteransCrisisLine.net/get-help/chat).</p>	<p>Are you a #Veteran going through crisis? Call (1-800-273-8255 and Press 1), text (838255), or chat (VeteransCrisisLine.net/get-help/chat). #VeteransCrisisLine</p>	<p>Are you a #Veteran going through crisis? Call (1-800-273-8255 and Press 1), text (838255), or chat (VeteransCrisisLine.net/get-help/chat). #VeteransCrisisLine</p>	 <p><i>SPP_VCL Q2 Social Media_2</i></p>  <p><i>SPP_VCL Q2 Social Media_2</i></p>

Thank You!



AgHealth

Central States

Center for Agricultural
Safety and Health

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