

June 1, 2025

Mental Health for Farmers & Beyond

There is 911 but did you know that there is now 988? This simple three digit number helps an individual to find the help they need in the time of a possible crisis. Creating awareness though has become a passion of local resident John Schlimm, the dutch manufacturing class, Chi Catalone from

Penn State Ext, and leaders across the county.

The month of May is mental health awareness month with the end of the month focusing on mental health in agriculture on the 29th. Did you know that suicides among farmers are actually surpassing the military? We see so much about the 22 push up challenge to grow awareness among veterans and military mental health, but there is not much to let people know that the agriculture field is becoming more challenging and many farmers are too proud to ask for help. In fact, just today, I caught a short video clip of ER nurses explaining that if a farmer comes to the ER, then it's not good. They pretty much are already half gone if they are there, especially if they came on their own. It was making light of the tough nature of the farmer, but truly that tough nature is what stops many of us from asking for help.

Mental health in the agriculture field is becoming a more prominent topic. Penn State Ext is offering QPR trainings, our local community is working to build awareness of the 988 number, podcasts about farmer stress, the PA Farm bill has created a special hotline for farmers to call since agriculture struggles are different than some every other day stresses, and the farm bureau is working to create awareness among their members. It is also becoming a big thing among farmers that share on social media to create awareness and they show their own struggles so that others know they are not alone.

Creating awareness among the local community is also important. Recently, as local community leader John Schlimm was meeting with the leadership class to share about the 988 coin and the plans for dispersing, he was not aware of the increase in suicides among farmers. After learning about how the Ag field is being affected, that became part of the awareness for the community as well. Mental health awareness and understanding is important, but it helps when the community understands that farmers are faced with many different challenges that might be harder for others to understand. As the Nation, state, and county work to create opportunities for farmers to reach out, they are also working to create ways for others as well, so if you were able to be apart of the 988 movement, thank you! If you got a coin, be sure to keep it with you to share about it each day, and if you get a chance, pray for your farmers. Many of us are strong, and unwilling to ask for help so a small gesture and your support often goes a long way with our emotions. Please don't ever be afraid to ask for help, it's only 3 numbers away.



Farmers Always Learn From Each Other

Many know that we all hold off the farm jobs, because farming is like one of the only occupations we swear you have to go to work in order to do. One of the outside jobs is with Penn State Extension as the Master Gardener Coordinator and it is a great privilege to work with this awesome group of people. One of the goals is to help them find educational opportunities and boy did we hit the jack pot when we asked Shiitake Joe for a tour! Joe has been working for months on growing a bigger, better mushroom farm and his efforts are all coming together. He has put his heart and soul into it and it truly is a wonderful place and the mushrooms he is growing are incredible. We love selling his mushrooms and are so glad that we have the opportunity to know him and watch this business flourish right here in Elk County. If you haven't checked out his mushrooms or powders, we encourage you to do that. Lion's mane mushrooms have some great health benefits and the shiitakes are just a delicious mushroom to sautee up with some fresh veggies. Snag your mushrooms from our online store or in your weekly order. You won't be disappointed with what Joe has to offer and what he grows into.



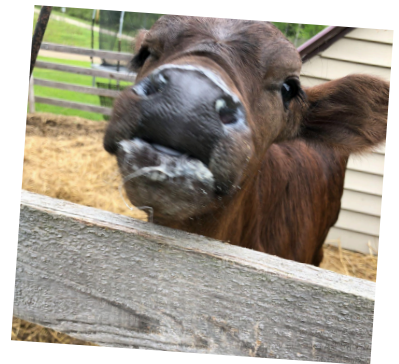
Learning Happens Daily & In All Things

Well it is officially the time of the year where we really, really need the tractors and leave it to them that this is the time of the year where they break down. Technology advancements have been great in many things, but the ones they have made in our farm equipment are not farmer friendly. Many of us are dealing with breakdowns, dealerships that cost ALOT of money to deal with the problem, we then have to work on their schedule, come up with extra money we really didn't have, and well planting falls behind even more. Sometimes we have to figure out how to fix the problem ourselves and don't get us wrong. Many times we can fix the problem, but in some areas it becomes a learning game. It is great that everyone can all learn together on this project. Please say a

prayer that the hours of work tearing it apart will help the tractor function because Mother Nature is finally showing some sunshine and dry days ahead and we have some plants that gotta get in the ground.

Farm Updates

Just a quick update from the farm on Moose. Moose is growing and is three weeks old now. It's hard to believe how fast he is growing. He has been experiencing the outdoors and learning how to chug his milk from a bowl. Our lamb that we have been rehabbing is getting better and stronger each day. He is moving around on his own more and eating hay and grain like a champ. We are so excited to see some of our hard work pay off with some of the animals we care for.



The Summer to Learn New Things



Well as many know, Garrett decided that this was the year he was going to break a bone. As a mom, I have been wondering when these boys of mine would break something. I just didn't think Garrett would do it so great the first time around. He injured himself giving the Karate dummy a kick. He officially broke his ankle and we are still waiting on the MRI results about his knee. Garrett was the main tractor driver. He cut and baled a lot of the hay last year and he was my go to when I needed the stronger jobs done during the day while all the guys are at work. However, Logan is coming up and he has been showing signs of wanting some more responsibilities so here we are. Since I don't really know the tractor well enough to drive on my own, Logan gets to help. However he isn't strong enough to hook equipment up and be on his own yet, so he gets the company of his mother

while we do the work that needs done during the day. I keep thinking how this is Logan's summer to see what he can do and well Garrett is looking for jobs he can do. He is currently on egg washing duty but he has discovered he can mow the grass so in between the rain drops you might see him on the lawnmower. I have a feeling when the weather finally lets up, Garrett will be itching to be outside more and annoyed that he is laid up but for now easy jobs in the house keep him occupied. If you have any ideas of jobs to give a teen boy please let me know. I have been considering making him start his next school early and he is not fond of this idea.

Do You Want to Know What it is Like to be A Farmer?

Our Popular Farmer for a Day camp is back this summer for kids who are interested in learning what it is like to be a farmer. Camp will be Monday, July 28th through Thursday, July 31st. This year kids will be learning all about what it is like to be a farmer through planting, harvesting, animal care, learning experiences, games, and more. The camp will run from 9:30am-1:30pm and kids are asked to bring their own lunch. Camp has limited applications accepted so we encourage you to scan the QR code now and register the kiddos in your life. If you have any questions you can contact Amanda at ambalon46@gmail.com or 814-335-0804. We can't wait to see you at camp this summer.



actually planned due to an error in calculating (oops) but we know that you all will help with our boo-boo. You see we may have accidentally planned batch 2,3, and apparently 4 (arriving June 4th) a little too close together. Yep you read that right we will have 3 batches here at the same time and well that means that they will all be ready close together so stay tuned because we will have bulk orders opened before you know it. You don't want to miss out on stocking your freezers with some of our fresh chicken this year. So be sure you check it out when we open them. In the meantime, pray that we don't go crazy during this time where we will be raising the majority of our chicks for the year in this bulk of time.

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MeatBird Raising

Did we tell you how many meat birds we are raising this year? Probably more than we

