

Top tips for managing stress

1. Treat yourself as your farm's/croft's **number one asset**. Make your health and wellbeing a business priority.
2. Build **rest and recovery** into your daily and weekly work schedule. All top sports teams allow for downtime as no one can go 110% all the time without a break.
3. **Prioritise** during busy times. What are the top two tasks you need to work on today? Once you're feeling back in charge your stress levels will go down.
4. Look after **the basics**. Eat well, get enough quality sleep, keep active and get 'farm fit' for busier periods.
5. Talk to mates and **stay connected**. Others have been there and everyone needs support. If you're in a relationship talk things through together.
6. Get off farm/croft and **do stuff you enjoy** – fishing, team sport, coaching, wild swimming, walking, volunteering, meeting a friend for a cuppa – whatever helps you recharge.
7. Think in ways that keep things in **perspective** and that help boost your mood.

What is burnout?

Burnout is a way to describe feeling physically, mentally and emotionally exhausted. It is accompanied by feelings of ineffectiveness, lack of accomplishment, cynicism and detachment.

It's your body letting you know that it can no longer cope with the demands you are placing on it and that you need a break. It can sneak up on you like a slow leak in a tractor tyre. Health, relationships and family life can suffer. It can also make you more at risk of accident and injury.



Our industry is changing and whilst it's important our businesses evolve, we mustn't forget about our most important asset, ourselves, and that starts with our wellbeing. Small changes can make a big difference, find out what works for you."



Jock Gibson, Edinvale Farm & Macbeth's Butchers

Farmstrong Scotland is a rural wellbeing programme for the farming and crofting sector, sharing peer-to-peer tips and advice.

www.farmstrongscotland.org.uk

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If you are concerned about yourself or someone else, talk to someone. Contact **your doctor**, **RSABI** (24-hours): 0808 123 4555, **Breathing Space**: 0800 838 587 or **Samaritans**(24-hours): 116 123

FARM STRONG
Scotland

Stressed out?

Here are some questions that can help you get through.

Am I getting enough sleep?

Do I have downtime to recharge?

Am I talking to someone about what's on my mind?

Am I eating well and keeping physically active?

Do I have a list of what is realistic to achieve each day?



Live Well Farm & Croft Well

Handling the ups & downs

Farming and crofting has its share of highs, lows and challenges. Heavy workloads, combined with things outside of your control, such as weather and market prices, can increase the risk of unhealthy stress and burnout.

Research shows that stress and fatigue are also contributing factors to accident and injury on the farm or croft.

The good news is that knowing the warning signs and acting on them helps to manage stress and prevent burnout.



“Pursue interests away from the farm or croft. For me it’s included everything from amateur operatics to curling and skiing.”

Neil Thomson
Caveton Mill, Scottish Borders



”Just as the land needs to rejuvenate - and can’t be worked tirelessly without a break - those of us who work in farming and crofting need to give their own physical and mental health some recovery time.”

Lynn Cassells
Lynbreck Croft, Highlands

Signs of unhealthy stress — what to look out for

Your body

Tick all those that apply to you

- Breathing problems
- Chest tightness
- Upset stomach e.g. nausea, diarrhoea, constipation
- Tension, aches and pains
- Headaches
- Fatigue
- Feeling ‘wired’—unable to relax
- Lower immunity, catching any bug going around and taking longer to recover
- Reduced sex drive

Your mind

- Thinking feels sped up and thoughts are intrusive
- Difficulty making decisions
- Forgetfulness
- Poor concentration
- Poor problem solving
- Easily distracted
- Feeling overwhelmed by worries

Your emotions

- Feeling overwhelmed, stuck or trapped
- ‘Short fuse’—bursts of anger often at small issues
- Tearfulness
- Feeling down
- Feeling lonely
- Loss of motivation and enjoyment
- Reduced self-confidence

Your actions & behaviour

- Sleep problems e.g. can’t get to sleep or wake up often, or sleeping too much and can’t get out of bed
- Poor eating
- Withdrawing from people and activities
- Unhealthy alcohol, tobacco and caffeine use
- Becoming reactive rather than proactive
- Avoiding situations or issues e.g. not returning phone calls or opening invoices
- Delaying demanding tasks e.g. paperwork