



15 February 2021

Ref: 214

Mental health the biggest hidden problem in farming today

IAgrE is encouraging farmers and those living and working in agriculture to start putting their mental health first..

“We are supporting the fourth annual Mind Your Head campaign (15 19 February) organised by farming charity the Farm Safety Foundation. The campaign is aimed at raising awareness of an issue that few in the industry want to talk about but that affects one in four people in the world at some point in their lives,” said IAgrE CEO Charlie Nicklin.

According to recent research carried out by the Farm Safety Foundation. 88% of farmers under 40 now rate poor mental health as the biggest hidden problem faced by farmers (an increase from 81% in 2018). The UK wide survey of 450 young farmers also revealed that 89% believe that talking about the issue will remove the stigma attached to it.

Charlie added: “Mental health is an issue that we are hearing more about now, especially after the challenges of 2020 and the coronavirus pandemic. IAgrE is backing Mind Your Head as Brexit, the weather and the virus are causing levels of stress and anxiety in the industry to rise so there is no better time to focus attention on the physical and mental wellbeing of an industry under pressure.”

Health & Safety Consultant Alan Plom advises that we should encourage people who visit farms such as advisors, sales staff, technicians involved in maintenance of machinery, dealers and suppliers to look out for anyone who is having difficulty and point them in the direction of appropriate help and advice. Companies can also help by raising awareness of the useful resources through their own networks, e.g., displaying posters at sales points or in offices, attaching them to emails, invoices etc.

IAgrE member Mike Whiting a Certification & Compliance Officer said, “Even though farmers and those within the industry are classed as key workers and therefore can justify travelling for work, providing social distancing and PPE requirements are followed, this is still

iagre.org

Agriculture – Forestry – Horticulture – Environmental - Amenity

challenging. The cold weather doesn't promote exercise but a brisk walk or run can stimulate the senses and therefore affect people's motivation.

With many of the support networks for farmers being closed as a result of lockdown, we need to stay connected and take notice of those in the farming community, whether family or friends, who may be struggling with their mental health and make an effort to learn more about the issue so we can offer the right support."

For more information on 'Mind Your Head' visit www.yellowwellies.org or follow @yellowwelliesUK on Instagram, Facebook and Twitter

IAgrE:

IAgrE is the professional body for scientists, technologists, engineers, academics, managers and students working in the landbased sector and has an international membership base.

As a licensed body of the Engineering Council (EngC) and a founding Constituent Body of The Society for the Environment (SocEnv), IAgrE registers suitably experienced professionals as Chartered Engineers, Chartered Environmentalists, Incorporated Engineers and Engineering Technicians.

IAgrE is a Licensed Body of the Engineering Council and a founding constituent body of the Society for the Environment Company No: 648041 Charity No: 257303

For further details, contact Marion King at IAgrE Communications at pressroom@iagre.org or call 01234 750876 – mobile 07843382362

iagre.org

Agriculture – Forestry – Horticulture – Environmental - Amenity