



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
CENTER FOR FAITH BASED AND NEIGHBORHOOD PARTNERSHIPS

USDA Mental Health Awareness Month Workshop Series

LGBTQI+ Mental Health in Agricultural Communities

The meeting features a special message from Secretary Thomas Vilsack, as well as from our partners at the National Young Farmers Coalition's Cultivemos Program, the North Central Farm and Ranch Stress Assistance Center, and Not Our Farm.

Tuesday, 6/6 | 2:00 - 3:30 PM EDT

REGISTER

CONTACT: center@usda.gov



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anita adalja (all pronouns)
founder/program manager

USDA
LGBTQI+ Mental Health
in Agriculture
June 6, 2023



WE ARE NOT FARM OWNERS, BUT WE ARE THE HEARTS OF THE OPERATION.

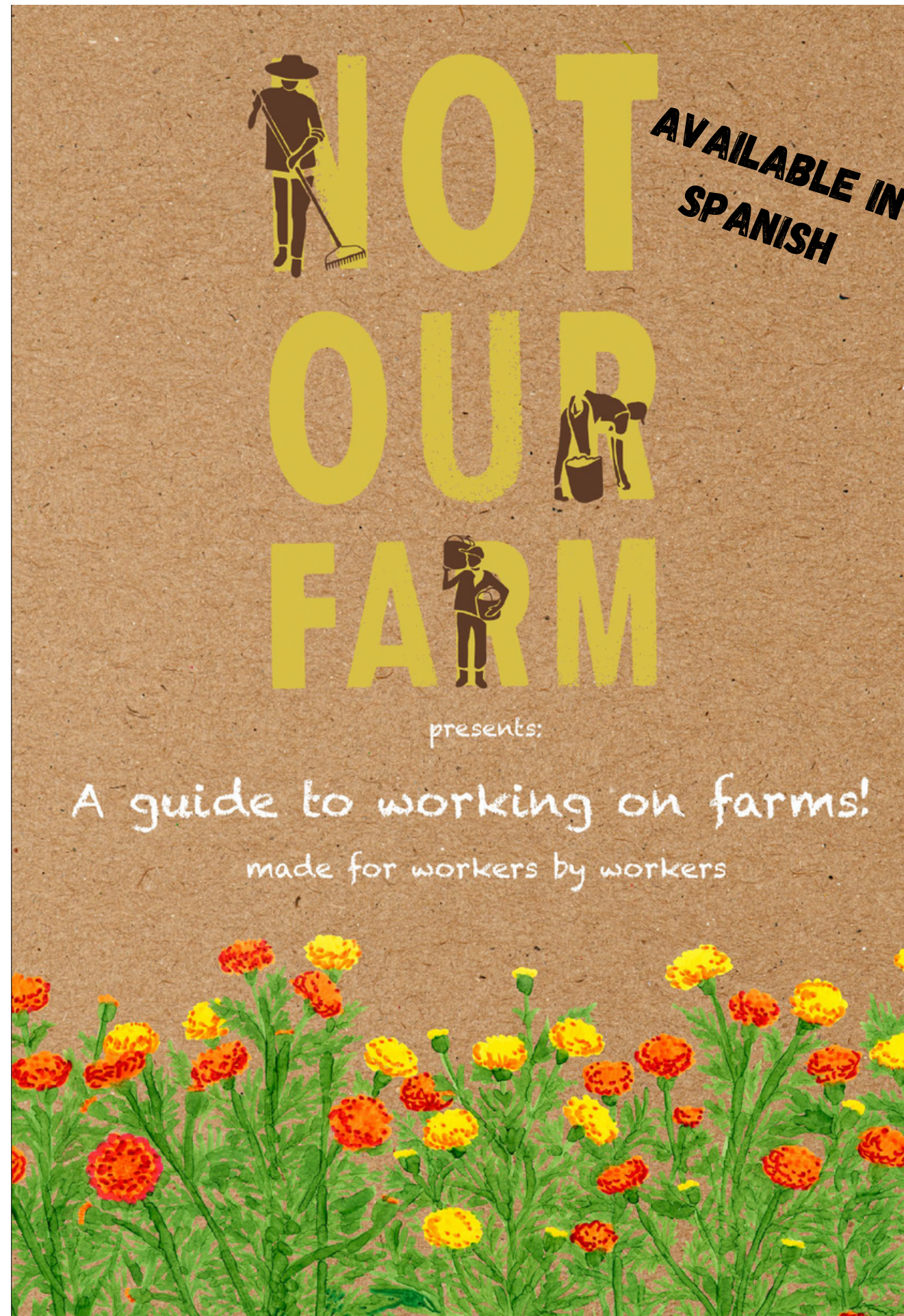


Not Our Farm's goals:

- storytelling and celebration of workers
- recognize workers as experts in the field
- offer community resource sharing
- acknowledge + stop normalizing abuses / validate worker experience

*together, define and realize farming futures that
center workers !*

RESOURCES - WORKER ZINE, CONSUMER GUIDE, TOOLKIT

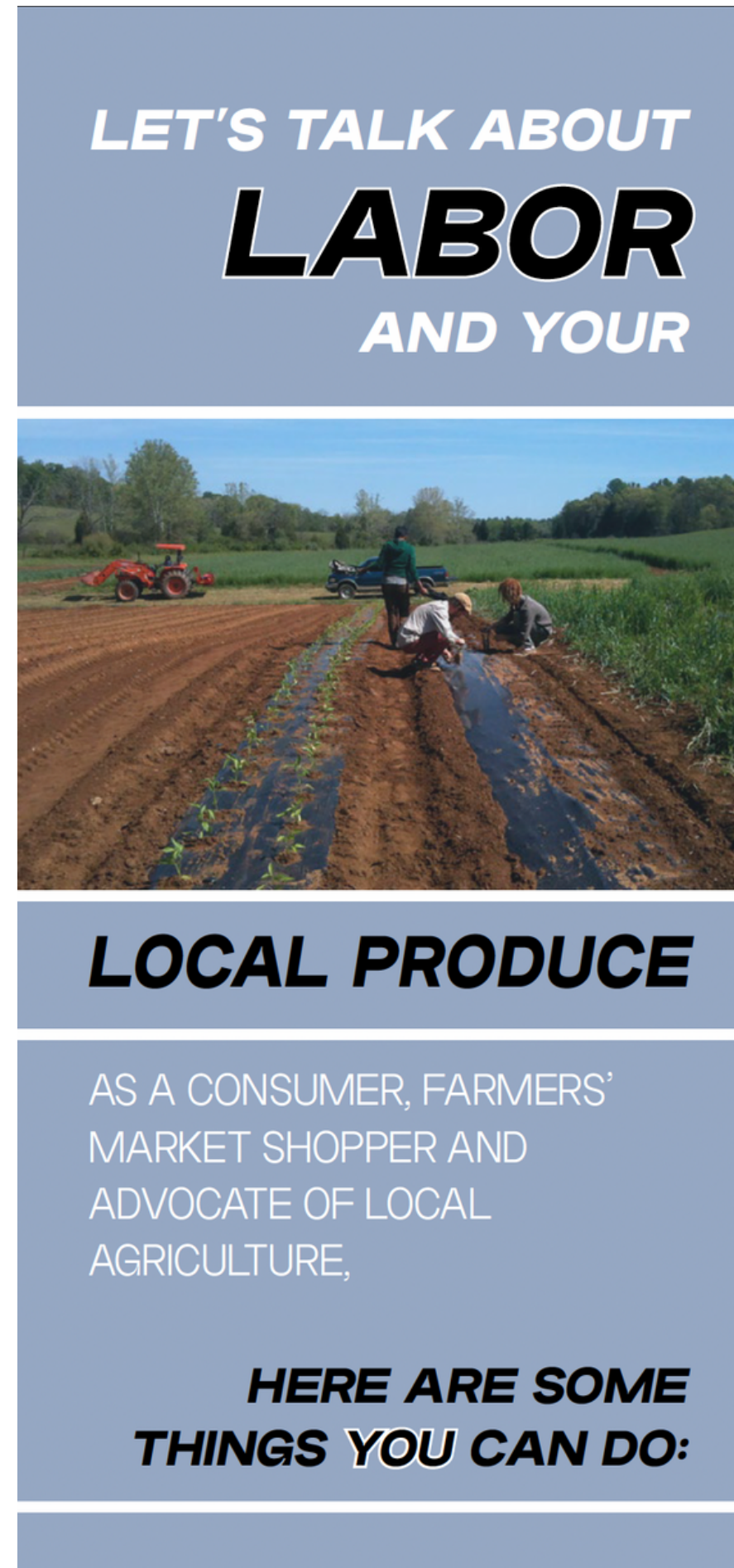


NOT OUR FARM


AVAILABLE IN SPANISH

presents:

A guide to working on farms!
made for workers by workers



LET'S TALK ABOUT
LABOR
AND YOUR



LOCAL PRODUCE

AS A CONSUMER, FARMERS' MARKET SHOPPER AND ADVOCATE OF LOCAL AGRICULTURE,

HERE ARE SOME THINGS YOU CAN DO:




Farming Into the Future by Centering Farmworkers

A Deep Dive Into What Diversified Vegetable Farm Employees Value in a Workplace

Sarah Janes Ugoretz, Anita Adalja, Rue Policastro

"To be truly visionary we have to root our imagination in our concrete reality while simultaneously imagining possibilities beyond that reality." - bell hooks



To all of the farmers who made this resource possible - thank you.

DREAM FARM THEMES

- **COMMUNITY CARE**
- **COLLECTIVE MODELS / NO RUGGED INDIVIDUALISM**
- **REST**
- **PARALLEL PATHS**
- **EMBRACE OF ALL**
- **COMMITMENT TO EDUCATION + LEARNING**
- **RIGHT RELATIONSHIP WITH THE LAND**

NOT OUR FARM

stay with us --

- read our stories
- share our project and resources
- participate in a worker interview
- continue living your farming futures

www.notourfarm.org



@notourfarm

Bilal Sarwari (he/him)



About your panelist:

- Farmed for 10 years, both in the Atlanta area and southwest Georgia
- Currently working as a gardener and a group facilitator
- Worked at an adolescent crisis stabilization unit (ACSU) as a therapeutic gardener
- Currently working as a consultant for Cultivemos, paid by Young Farmers, on a Farmer Cohort project
- Serves as a board member for Slow Food USA and the U.S. Representative for Slow Food International Council
- Member of advisory board for Love is Love Cooperative Farm in Georgia

43.8 million

The number of adults who experience some form of mental illness each year in the United States, that's
1 in 5 adults

Mental Health Crisis De-escalation Techniques

How to Help

- De-escalation Techniques
 - Keep your voice calm
 - Listen
 - Express support
 - Avoid unbroken eye contact
 - Low stimulation
 - Move slowly
 - Avoid touching
 - Gently announce actions
 - Don't block exits
-

Mental Health Crisis Resources

How to Help

BIPOC/Queer-specific resources in bold

- Resources
 - Farm Aid Hotline
 - National Suicide Prevention Lifeline (988)
 - Cultivemos Resources
 - **National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI)**
 - **The Mental Health Coalition**
 - Your Community
 - Self-Harm Risk: Emergency Room
 - **The Trevor Project**
 - **Trans Lifeline**
-

Identificando una crisis de salud mental

Cómo ayudar

Recursos en español

- Recursos
 - [NAMI's Compartiendo Esperanza](#)
 - [Conciencia De Salud Mental - Recursos De Salud Mental](#)
 - [Recursos En Español | Mental Health America](#)
 - [El Instituto Nacional de la Salud Mental](#)
-

Thank you!

Acknowledgements, Sources,
and Gratitude

- Dr. Jac Wypler (she/they)
 - Young Farmers Cultivemos Team
 - The Language Justice Team
 - View Point Health in Georgia
 - Farm Aid
 - American Psychological Association
 - National Alliance on Mental Illness
 - The Mental Health Coalition
-



LGBTQ+ Farmers and Mental Health

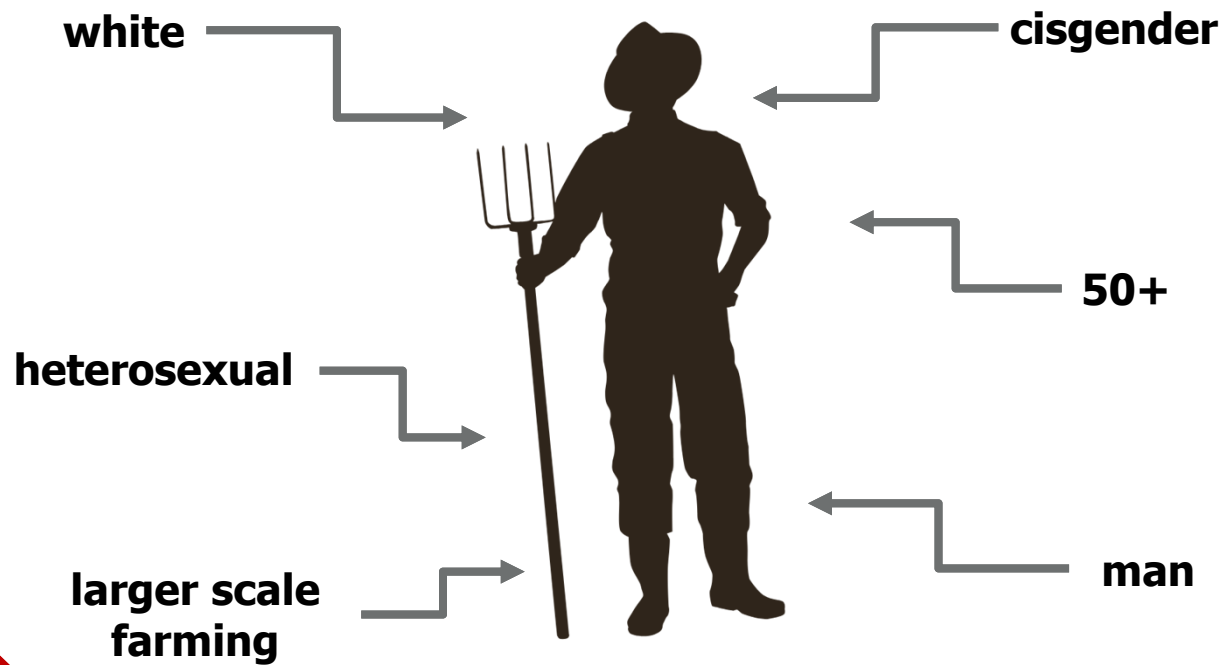
USDA Mental Health Awareness Month
Workshop Series
June 6, 2023

Courtney Cuthbertson, Ph.D.
(they/them)

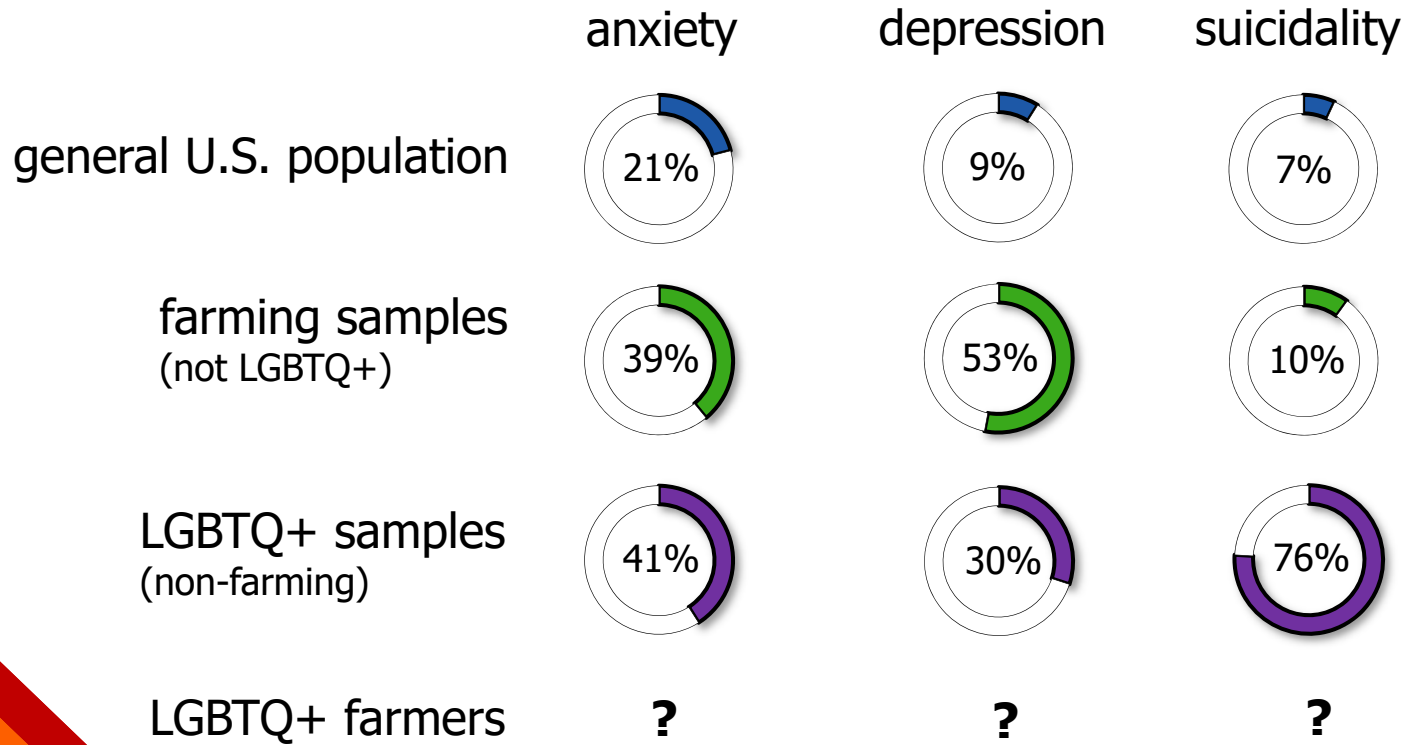
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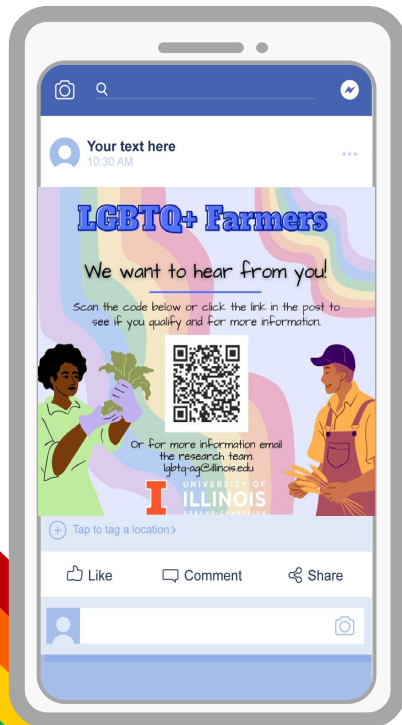
The "Farmer" in Farming Research



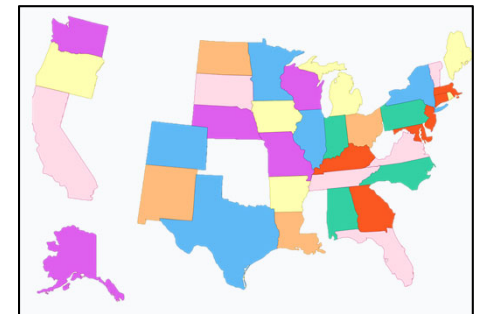
What do we know about mental health?



Current Study



- Survey (n=148)
 - 36 states
 - 32.5 years old (mean)
 - 53.4% full-time in ag.
 - 43.9% farmworkers
 - 76.9% organic production
 - 64.9% vegetables and/or fruit
 - 7.2 years farming (mean)
- Interviews (n=17)



Participants

Gender Identity	%	n
Woman	39.2	58
Non-binary	35.1	52
Man	29.1	43
Genderqueer or genderfluid	25.7	38
Agender	6.8	10
Questioning or unsure	6.1	9
Suppressed*	2.1	3

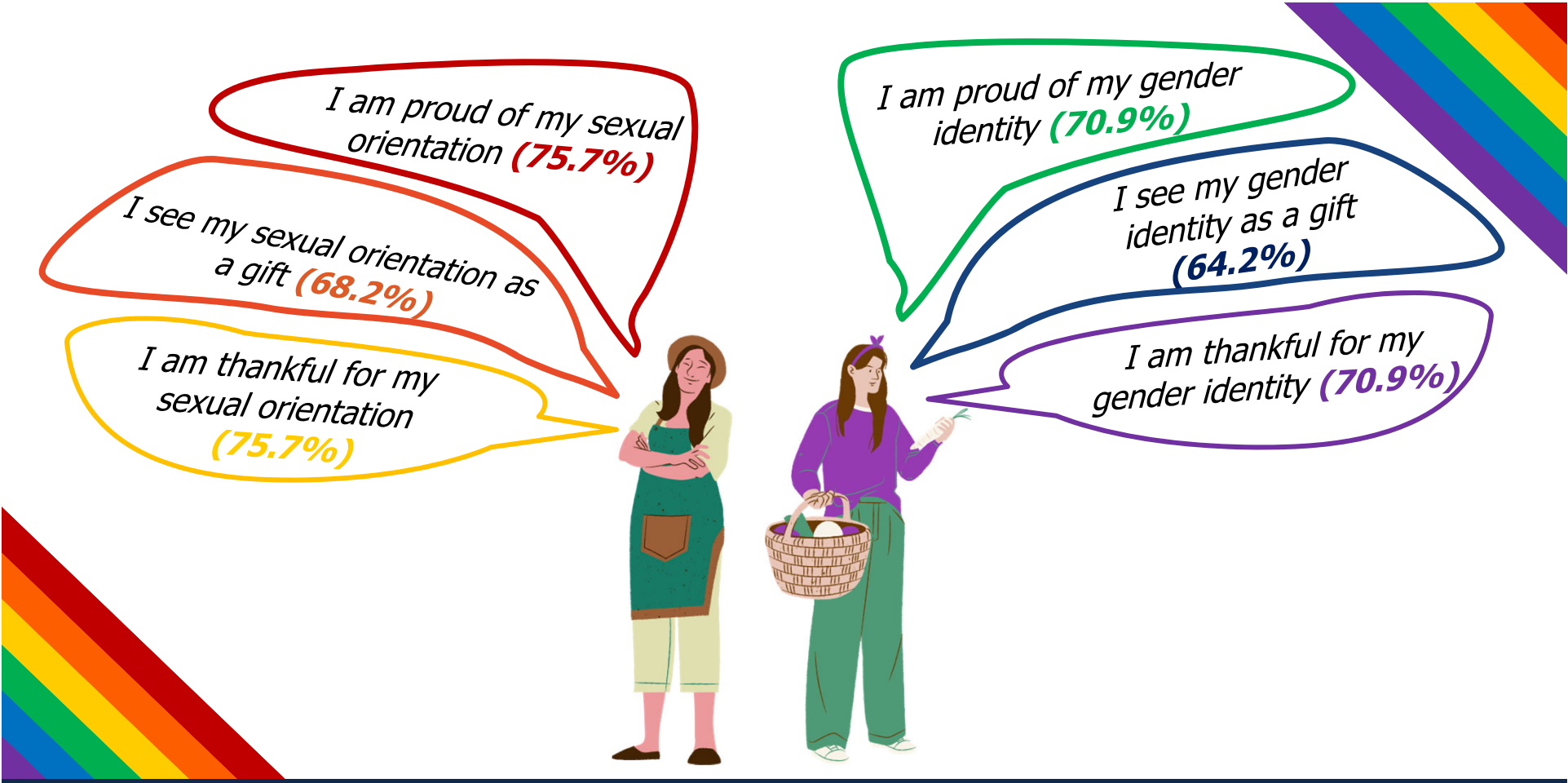
Sexual Identity	%	n
Queer	58.1	86
Gay	24.3	36
Lesbian	23.6	35
Bisexual	22.3	33
Pansexual	18.9	28
Fluid	7.4	11
Same-gender loving	6.8	10
Asexual	4.1	6
Suppressed*	4.7	7

38.4% of participants were transgender.



gentle playful
 curious daughter
 jewish disabled human-being determined
 hardworking open-minded neurodivergent community-builder
 authentic excited-to-get-outside very-stressed-right-now
 person-who-makes-music partner kind woman lover
 sibling making-my-way non-binary optimistic white big-sister
 person-who-farms compassionate farmer queer someone
 passionate unsure-how-to-make-this-work life-long-learner
 excited-about-the-future
 really-good-at-getting-shit-done
 queer-organic-vegetable-farmer
 liver-in-a-commune
 loves-connecting-with-nature
 really-good-at-networking environmentally-oriented
 queer-and-trans thoughtful
 community-oriented orchardist
 loves-the-outdoors christian
 earth-caretaker growing
 genderqueer student person
 plant-person
 incredibly-hardworking maker-of-things transparent learner
 strong-as-fuck data-analyst





Stressful aspects of farming

- Having too much work for one person (2.88)
- Weather (2.84)
- Balancing many roles as family member and farmer (2.78)
- Not enough cash/capital for unexpected problems (2.78)



Stressful aspects of farming

- “lack of other queer people in farming” / “lack of queer community”
- “homophobia from fellow farmers”
- “non-inclusivity in the workplace”
- “having your personal life tied to your business profitability in a small town/ rural area”
- “heteropatriarchal discrimination in town government and granting agencies”

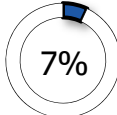
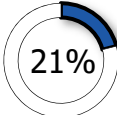
“...there are a lot of queer people who want to do more, and know more in agriculture, and **do not feel safe, or wanted, or welcome.**”

Poor mental health?



anxiety depression suicidality

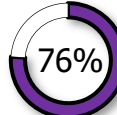
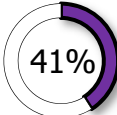
general U.S. population



farming samples
(not LGBTQ+)



LGBTQ+ samples
(non-farming)



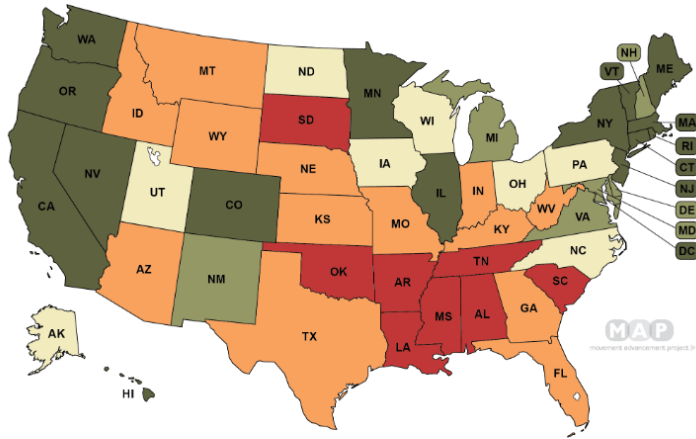
LGBTQ+ farmers
(current sample)



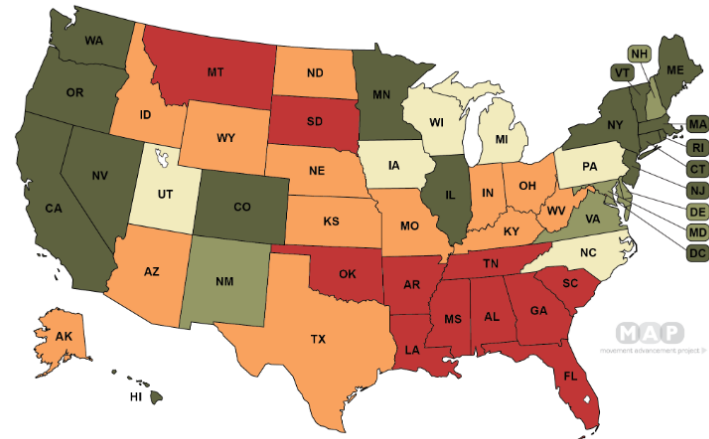
What contributes? What protects?

- Risk factors:
 - Farm financial stress
 - Farm operations stress
 - Farm work stress
 - Farm-related government/
external stress
 - Farm isolation stress
 - LGBTQ+ related victimization
 - Negative-low state policy
support
- Protective factors:
 - Self identity affirmation
 - LGBTQ+ companionship
 - Social support from
friends
 - Being out to co-workers
 - Medium-high state policy
support

February 2023



June 2023



U.S. Territories



U.S. Territories



<https://www.lgbtmap.org/>

Taking pride in queer people and queer farmers

“Queer farmers are really special because we're willing to look at things **outside of the binary and outside of the traditional and normal ways.** there's a certain creativity that I think queerness opens up for people and just different ways of being, and I hope that **more farmers in the future are willing to expand the scope of what they know as agriculture and nature and the world.** ”

“It is a source of pride for me, I think, to be a **queer person in rural America** and a **queer person in an industry that is not associated with queer people.** ”




Ash + Chess



Social environments within and beyond agriculture contribute to LGBTQ+ farm stress and mental health.

“I wish that non-queer farmers understood not only the breadth of experience of what it can mean to be queer, but the breadth of experience that they could be having themselves, and that they thought about how they're taking up space and how that impacts people around them. **How are you interacting with a space, and are you making it comfortable for other people?**”



“It would make the world of a difference **if more farms were just loving and had a basic level of respect for everybody**, regardless of their ability, their race, their gender, their sexuality. I really wish that more farmers would have... more empathy centered in their business structure and the way they organize things and how they treat people.”

What resources can help?

LGBT National Hotline
888-843-4564

TRANS LIFELINE US (877) 565-8860
Canada (877) 330-6366

sage | Advocacy & Services for LGBTQ+ Elders
We refuse to be invisible®

 **North Central Farm and Ranch Stress Assistance Center**
www.farmstress.org

IOWA CONCERN hotline
800-447-1985
- call or text -
stress counseling
legal education
financial concerns 
IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY
Extension and Outreach

NATIONAL SUICIDE PREVENTION LIFELINE
1-800-273-TALK (8255)
suicidepreventionlifeline.org

988 SUICIDE & CRISIS LIFELINE

I'm not ok.

I'm here, and I'm listening.

CRISIS TEXT LINE | Text HELLO to 741741.

Thank you.

- LGBTQ+ farmers
- Research team
 - Dane Rivas-Koehl
 - Anisa Codamon
 - Alyssa Billington
 - Matthew Rivas-Koehl
- Samantha Joseph and Alex Cordova
- Jac Wypler

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