



"Saving Lives in Tennessee"

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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TSPN Announces the Tennessee Farmers Suicide Prevention Task Force

NASHVILLE, Tenn. — The Tennessee Suicide Prevention Network (TSPN) in partnership with the Tennessee Department of Agriculture wishes to announce the formation of the Farmers Suicide Prevention Task Force (FSPTF). This joint effort of TSPN and the Tennessee Department of Agriculture, which was created and approved by the TSPN Gubernatorial appointed Advisory Council, will work to proactively address the issue of suicide in Tennessee. The task force will meet to create and carry out action items to proactively reach this population.

TSPN's Executive Director, Scott Ridgway, MS, expressed his enthusiasm, stating "with the support of the Task Force member, TSPN will be better prepared to assist Tennessee Farmers in getting the help they need to continue to prevent suicide in our state." Many of the factors that affect agricultural production are largely beyond the control of the producer. Specific stressors for this population include financial concerns, personal or family concerns, work-related injuries, loss of crop or livestock and weather. "Farming isn't just a job – it's a life's work," Agriculture Commissioner Jai Templeton said. "Many Tennessee farmers are facing challenges right now and experiencing different kinds of stress. However, those in the agriculture community look after one another. Our producers deserve access to resources that support them, and we plan to provide just that." To find out more about this population, visit our website at <http://tspn.org/farmers-and-suicide-prevention>.

By employing the expertise of key stakeholders in the field, to serve on this task force, it is the hope that this effort will expand to other entities throughout the state, creating atmospheres of safety and

suicide awareness for Tennessee's Farmers. Members on the Task Force represent Centerstone, the Farm Animal Care Coalition of Tennessee, Farm Credit, Middle Tennessee State University, Tennessee Cattleman's Association, Tennessee Dairy Producers Association, Tennessee Farm Bureau, Tennessee Farmer's Co-op, Tennessee Pork Producers, Tennessee Poultry Association, Tennessee Soybean Association, Tennessee State University, University of Tennessee, and University of Tennessee Extensions.

17 Appointed Member Task Force:

Co-chair: Carol Coley McDonald, Tennessee Department of Agriculture, Assistant Commissioner, Policy and Legislation

Co-chair: Scott Ridgway, MS., TSPN Executive Director

Centerstone- Lee Fields Wambles, Criminal Justice, Liaison Coordinator

Farm Animal Care Coalition of Tennessee- Lou Nave, Executive Director

Farm Credit- Scott Lewis, Relationship Manager

Middle Tennessee State University- Dr. Chaney Mosley, Assistant Professor, Agricultural Education

Tennessee Cattlemen's Association- Charles Hord, Executive Vice President

Tennessee Dairy Producers Association- Stan Butt, Executive Director

Tennessee Farm Bureau representative- Dan Strasser, Director of Special Programs

Tennessee Farmer's Co-op- Ryan King, Event and Marketing Coordinator

Tennessee Pork Producer's- Phyllis Ferguson, Executive Vice President

Tennessee Poultry Association- Dale Barnett, Executive Director

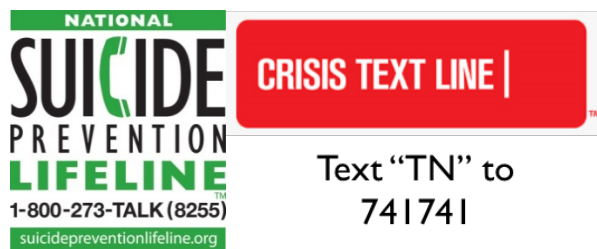
Tennessee Soybean Association- Richard Jameson, Member of TN Soybean Promotion Board

Tennessee State University- Lauren Kennedy, Ph.D, Finis Stribling III, Jennifer Goodrich, Extension Services

University of Tennessee- Dr. Emily Paskewitz, Assistant Professor, School of Communication Studies

University of Tennessee Extension- Dr. Heather Wallace, Assistant Professor, Family and Consumer Sciences

University of Tennessee Extension- Ms. Mary Beth Henley, Franklin Co. Director & Ext. Agent III



TTY line: 1-800-799-4TTY (4889)

For non-emergency information on suicide prevention, contact the Tennessee Suicide Prevention Network at (615) 297-1077 or tspn@tspn.org. More information about TSPN is available at the agency website (www.tspn.org)

TSPN is the statewide public-private organization responsible for implementing the Tennessee Strategy for Suicide Prevention. TSPN and its volunteers work across the state to organize activities & projects promoting suicide prevention awareness, providing suicide prevention & crisis intervention training to community organizations, and conducting postvention sessions for schools & organizations after suicides occur.