

Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources Presents:

MassGrown Wellness PR Playbook

Massachusetts Agricultural Community
Mental Health & Wellness Program





Introduction

PR Playbook Overview

The following playbook contains information, messaging and resources to leverage when promoting the MassGrown Wellness (MGW) program and your involvement as a partner to your network and underserved agricultural communities.

About MassGrown Wellness

The MassGrown Wellness program, launched by the Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources (MDAR), is designed to address the mental health and wellness needs of the Massachusetts agricultural community, which includes farmers, ranchers, partner organizations and stakeholders. Through MassGrown Wellness, MDAR will provide the community with the language, context, and resources to enhance access to mental health services.

MassGrown Wellness Audiences

The audiences that MassGrown Wellness aims to reach are not only the farmers in the Massachusetts community, but also its supporters. These supporters include partner organizations like yours that work closely with the farming community, as well as family members and friends of these farmers and stakeholders within the Commonwealth’s agricultural industry. MassGrown Wellness understands that providing the tools and skills to identify the signs of stress with colleagues or loved ones is equally as important as providing resources to farmers.





Talking About MassGrown Wellness

Key Messages

When discussing the program with farmers, ranchers, partner organizations, stakeholders and colleagues, please refer to the following key messages:

- MassGrown Wellness provides the community with the language, context, and resources to enhance access to mental health services.
- The Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources launched MassGrown Wellness after conducting a comprehensive web-based survey of farmers and agricultural community stakeholders statewide identifying the most pressing concerns facing members of the Massachusetts agricultural community and how these factors are affecting their mental health and well-being.
- MDAR’s approach and resource materials were influenced by a partnership with FarmFirst, a Vermont-based program that provides farmers and their families with support.
- MassGrown Wellness is centered around raising awareness of best practices for self-care, de-escalation, and active listening skills as effective tools for people who aren’t mental health professionals.
- The program raises awareness of the unique stressors faced by farmers and educates the community of the signs of a farmer in distress.
- Farmers, partners and supporters who are interested in learning more can visit: mass.gov/massgrownwellness





Reaching the Farming Community

An important factor of this program's impact lies in the ability to reach those in the agricultural community who are in need of assistance. A crucial step necessary to address mental health issues in the community is to talk to each other and listen to others. Please share information about MGW's resources and services with those in your network and direct them to the website.

The Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources will also be sharing posters and postcards with your organization about identifying the signs of mental health issues in your partners or colleagues to be distributed to your network.

We highly encourage communicating information about this program and its resources during staff meetings, at events, through 1-1 conversations and more.





Reaching BIPOC Farmers

Some vital groups of farmers that are often underserved in the agricultural industry are the communities of Black, Indigenous, and farmers of color. The Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources acknowledges that there are unique stressors these farmers are facing, and MassGrown Wellness is committed to providing mental health resources and services to these communities.

Below is a list of resources that farmers of these communities can access:

- [Massachusetts General Hospital Mental Health Resources for Black, Indigenous and People of Color \(BIPOC\)](#)
 - [Local Resources](#)
 - [BIPOC Mental Health Provider Directories](#)
 - [Virtual Resources for BIPOC](#)
 - [Further Reads](#)
 - [Resources for Specific Groups](#)
- Cultivemos (www.cultivemos.org)



Reaching Veteran Groups

Veterans in the agricultural industry often struggle with mental health issues and don't always know how to reach out for help. Many veteran farmers are facing stressors in which not all of their colleagues, family and friends are equipped to handle.

MassGrown Wellness has compiled a list of resources specifically designed to address the mental health needs of veteran farmers:

- [Veterans Crisis Line](#)
 - Dial 988 Then Press 1
 - Text 838255
 - [Chat Online](#)
 - [Find Local Resources Near You](#)
 - [Veteran Support Network](#)
- [Massachusetts Women Veterans' Network](#)
 - [Contact and Get Involved](#)
 - Email: EOVSWomenVets@mass.gov



Promoting MassGrown Wellness

MassGrown Wellness has provided your organization with the following digital resources to help you support your community:

- Partner Tool Kit – this toolkit serves as a full reference library for you and your team. It includes resource materials such as trainings, worksheets, guides for identifying signs of stress in a farmer and how to connect them with the appropriate help, graphics/logos, program background information, and contacts/hotlines all compiled in one place.

- Downloadable PDF – to help your organization highlight MassGrown Wellness, we’ve created a downloadable PDF you can link to on your website, which provides a full overview of the program, summarizes its offerings and directs readers on how to get involved. This can also be incorporated into proactive stakeholder outreach, including newsletters and e-blasts to encourage your constituents to learn more about the program and your involvement.

- Partner Graphic Web Button– as a program partner, we welcome you to incorporate a MGW/MDAR branded graphic to your website, which will take readers to the MGW website to learn more about the program.



Promoting MassGrown Wellness

With all these elements in place, MDAR welcomes the opportunity to collaborate in sharing this information with your networks.

Leveraging your communications channels to promote the MassGrown Wellness program will offer your constituents the opportunity to take advantage of the many resources the program provides, and offers the opportunity for you to drive forward the conversation around the importance of mental health within the agricultural community.

The following page includes some building blocks, including:

- Earned Channel Media Relations Recommendations
- Owned Channel Website, Social Media & Outbound Marketing Recommendations
- Website & Hotlines





Earned Channels

Leverage this partnership by highlighting your participation in MassGrown Wellness as a proof point for your support of mental health in any earned media efforts.

Collaborate with MassGrown Wellness on earned media opportunities tied to the need for this program in the Massachusetts agricultural industry, what the program is offering farmers and supporters and how your organization is involved as a partner.

We encourage you to drive home the key messaging above and include a call-to-action such as visiting the MGW website.





Owned Channels

Leverage your owned channels, including social platforms, websites and email campaigns, to communicate messages and share MGW content, including posters, graphics, videos, etc. Below are some examples of how to raise awareness of this program in your network.

- ❑ Social Media – leverage calendar inflection points (mental health awareness days, farming recognition days, etc.) to share program tips, content and MGW messaging
- ❑ Newsletters – mirror social media outreach when sharing content via existing newsletters, driving your network to the MGW website to access tools and resources
- ❑ Website – direct people to the MassGrown Wellness website to learn more about the program, find hotlines and access contact information and add information to your own site
- ❑ In-person – distribute the posters, postcards and training guides provided by MDAR to your organization at staff meetings or events and leave additional materials in an accessible common space that is visible to your staff



Hotlines and Website

If you or a colleague in the agricultural community are experiencing a mental health crisis, please contact the emergency hotlines below:

- I. Massachusetts Behavioral Health Hotline: Call or text 833-773-2445 (BHHL)
- II. Web Chat: masshelpline.com
- III. Community Behavioral Health Centers
(CBHCs) <https://www.mass.gov/community-behavioral-health-centers>
- IV. Contact the Crisis Text Line by texting HOME to 741741
- V. Massachusetts 2-1-1
- VI. Contact Samaritans 24/7. Call or text the 24/7 helpline any time at 1-877-870-4673
- VII. National Suicide Prevention Helpline - Dial 988

For more information on the MassGrown Wellness program and to stay updated on new events and initiatives, please visit the website: mass.gov/massgrownwellness