

Broadcast-OSF SilverCloud Can Help Farmers Weather a Storm of Uncertainty

Western Illinois farmer Matthew Goedeke is like many other farmers this spring when he says “We’ve never been here before.”

Goedeke farms 1800 acres of corn and soybeans on family farms in Knox and Fulton County. He also has an off-farm job selling Ag products. He’s been anxious about this financial impact for him and his employees and he knows the toll this kind of pressure can have because unfortunately, he knows farmers who have taken their own life.

SOT-Western Illinois Farmer Mathew Goedeke

“They’re also the same guys, I talked to them quite often and I never really thought they had a problem or anything like that so it goes back to that, they just hold it in and in their minds, there’s really no other option.” (:14)

OSF HealthCare Behavioral Health Manager Luke Raymond said its important farmers know about [OSF SilverCloud](#), which offers a digital way to manage those stresses with support from the comfort of farmers’ home, shop or tractor.

Especially for farmers who are part of a generation of family farmers, Raymond says the pressure not to fail can be tremendous.

SOT-OSF HealthCare Behavioral Health Manager Luke Raymond

“It intensifies the pressure to maintain that family ownership of a farm. Couple that with some other factors that may be out of their control – whether it’s environmental factors like what we’ve seen this spring or economic factors – that can have a tremendously negative impact on their ability to manage those feelings of stress or worry,” according to Raymond. (:16)

Isolation also keeps farmers at a higher risk for depression, stress and anxiety.

SOT-OSF HealthCare Behavioral Health Manager Luke Raymond

“They don’t necessarily have close neighbors they can hang out with and have a beer at the end of the day or something like that that’s relaxing. That social isolation also leads to a lack of available resources.” Raymond added, “If you live 30 miles to the nearest town, that town may not even have a health clinic in it, much less a behavioral health resource.” (:16)

OSF SilverCloud, is a website and smart phone app that offers evidence-based tools for adults who are not in crisis but who could benefit from helpful assessments, exercises, and strategies available in short modules that are easy and available 24/7.

Goedeke has found himself tapping SilverCloud while waiting in his truck for chemicals to arrive or while at home watching TV.

SOT-Western Illinois Farmer Mathew Goedeke

“Based off of your personality, this offers some ways you can kind of deal with things and cope with things and go about tackling task at hand. It’s (OSF SilverCloud) super easy to navigate. You just scroll up, get to the bottom of that page, hit the button and it’s on to the next one.” (:13)

Raymond says it is a softer entry into receiving help which is important for farmers who research shows are more reluctant than most about seeking professional help for mental health struggles.

Goedeke says he gained new insights when the app encouraged him to re-examine his response to recent challenges.

SOT-Western Illinois Farmer Mathew Goedeke

“I felt like I could just relate more real-life scenarios helping me to take another at if I had thought of it this way, maybe I could have handled this situation better.” (:06)

SilverCloud is monitored by regional behavioral health navigators who can be accessed through a “Get Help” button to offer coaching, personalized support or to connect users with more immediate, community-based resources when warranted. Raymond says studies of SilverCloud users show a reduction in their symptoms of anxiety and depression are equal to those who’ve experienced traditional face-to-face therapy.

You do not have to be an OSF HealthCare patient to enroll in SilverCloud

To get started, create an account at: OSF.SilverCloudHealth.com/signup. Then, access the tool via web site or download the app.